McCLURE'S

AUGUST THE MAGAZINE OF ROMANCE 25 Cents

Copy
Editorial

DEAR DADDY

By Lillian Bennett

Only One Way You Can Get This Remarkable Pen!

You must try it FIVE days before you can keep it!

Equal to Any $7 or $8.75 Pen in Quality. . . Superior to Any Pen At Any Price in Performance

Only Way to Get the Postal: "Buy From One Who Owns One"—or Mail Coupon Below

THE man who invented this amazing pen consented to let us sell it only under one condition—that we work out a plan whereby the price would be within the reach of everyone, instead of selling it at $7.00 or $8.75, the price of other pens of equal quality.

Of course, it was impossible to sell this remarkable pen through the stores. Their profit alone on a $7.00 or $8.75 pen is *more than what you actually pay for the POSTAL RESERVOIR PEN.* And so we decided to let Uncle Sam do the selling for us—through the United States mails.

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No Other Fountain Pen Like It!

The Pen That Says "Fill Me Up!" When Empty

The POSTAL RESERVOIR PEN (named POSTAL because it is sold by mail only) is distinctive in design and contains features which are not found in any other pen. It is transparent, so you can always see when it needs filling. It is self-filling—employs an entirely new method, the easiest ever devised. Holds 3 to 4 times more ink than any other self-filling pen. Manufactured from same materials as used in highest priced pens. Never before have so many improvements and refinements been combined in a single, handsome, smooth-writing, never-clogging pen that you will be proud to own and delighted to use.

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It is Self-filling—The easiest of all pens to fill.

It Holds 3 to 4 Times More Ink Than Any Other Self-filling Pen—Fill it once a month—and get real "writing mileage."

And Remember—The materials and workmanship are guaranteed to be equal or superior to those found in *any* other pen, whether sold at $7.00, $8.75 or more.

How to Get the Postal Pen
SEND NO MONEY

Simply fill in and mail the coupon. Do not send a penny! When you get your Postal Pen, you will also receive 5 post cards, each worth 50c on the purchase price of another pen. Every Postal Pen owner finds that his friends admire his remarkable pen and ask where they can get others like it. You can easily sell your premium post cards for 50c each and earn back the full price of your pen. You do not have to sell the cards—dispose of them any way you wish—whatever you make on them is yours to keep.

Postal Pen Co., Inc., Desk 78, 41 Park Row New York City

Please send me one Postal Reservoir Pen, and five special Premium Postcards which I may give away or dispose of at 50c each. I will pay postman $2.50 upon receipt of the pen. If after 5 days' use I desire to return the Postal Pen, you agree to refund purchase price. Send me the....Men's size.....Women's size.

Name.....

Address.....

City.....*State*.....

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Five Days' FREE Trial!

Send for your POSTAL Pen NOW. State whether you want men's or women's model. Use it five days and if you are not delighted with it, return it and your money will be promptly refunded. You are to be the sole judge. Compare it with *any* pen at *any* price. *Remember the price is low only because our sales policy of manufacturer-to-user eliminates all in-between profits, commissions and handling.* Send the coupon NOW and learn what real fountain pen satisfaction is!

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RESERVOIR PEN

Actual Size is Larger Than This

POSTAL PEN CO., INC., 41 Park Row, Desk 78, New York City

Vol. 57

McCLURE'S

THE MAGAZINE OF ROMANCE

Arthur McKeogh, *Editor*

No. 2

August. 1926

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If every married woman sent for a copy of this frankly written booklet

NATURAL enough for the woman of refined tastes to feel a reserve about certain intimate matters. Her whole upbringing has been surrounded by silence, even secrecy. As time goes on she hesitates more and more to inquire of other women. To her former timidity is now added the fear of seeming ignorant. She builds around herself a wall of self-consciousness.

True, she is aware of many of the vital facts of life, but she is not *sure* of her knowledge. How convenient then to have the real truth, the *modern* truth, the frank, scientific truth about feminine hygiene. That is what this valuable booklet gives; that is why every married woman should send for a copy.

The truth about the use of poisonous antiseptics is something every physician knows, and every trained nurse. They have seen the havoc wrought among innocent women who, in their desire for complete surgical cleanliness have unwisely committed themselves to the use of bichloride of mercury. Well-meaning women, but ignorant of the risks they run of mercurial poisoning.

Physicians and nurses know also of the hazards of carbolic acid and its various compounds sold under the deadly label of the skull-and-cross-bones. Usually mixed with soapy ingredients, these carbolic acid preparations always contain the threat of injury to delicate membranes, finally resulting in hardened areas of scar-tissue.

New discovery does away with women's risks

Startling as these scientific statements are, there is another scientific fact which is a welcome reassurance. It is this: there *has* been discovered a powerful antiseptic which is *absolutely non-poisonous*. Its name is Zonite and it may well be called a marvel. It is over 40 times as strong as peroxide of hydrogen. It is harmless to human tissue. It gives complete surgical cleanliness and produces a soothing and healing effect.

Then compare the power of carbolic acid itself with the power of this great new antiseptic, Zonite, which has been well-called "the gentle giant." It is a fact that Zonite is *far more powerful* than any dilution of carbolic acid that can be used on the body. Yet what a difference in safety! Carbolic acid is a deadly poison—so caustic that it produces a burning and searing wherever it comes in contact with tissues and membranes.

Zonite, on the contrary, is just as *harmless* to human beings as it is *fatal* to germs. It will not harden delicate tissues, nor render them dull and insensitive. In fact, dental authorities are freely using and recommending Zonite for oral hygiene as a gargle or spray for the mouth and throat. As an antiseptic and germicide it is thoroughly reliable. A bottle of Zonite in the medicine chest can never lead to accidental poisoning. It is safe on the shelf, safe in the dark, safe in the hands of a child.

Is it any wonder, then, that the discovery of Zonite has been welcomed by physicians and nurses and women of refinement everywhere who realize the importance of personal hygiene to their lasting health and happiness? Zonite, clean and wholesome as an ocean breeze, is an assurance of daintiness, charm and freedom from worry.

You can buy Zonite at any drug store in the country

Zonite has quickly swept over the country; word of its power has passed from mouth to mouth. Already practically every drug store in America has it in stock. Zonite is a powerful deodorant and leaves no odor of its own after the first few minutes. Full directions with every bottle. Also send for special, free booklet prepared by the Women's Division. It is frank and scientific. Read it; pass it on to others. It is daintily illustrated and mailed upon request. Use the coupon below, Zonite Products Company, Postum Building, 250 Park Ave., New York, N.Y.

Zonite a medicine chest in itself

For prevention against colds, coughs grippe and influenza.

For a daily mouth-wash to guard against pyorrhea and other gum infections.

Remember that Zonite, though a very powerful antiseptic, is *non-poisonous* and absolutely safe to use.

Use Zonite Ointment for sunburn, insect bites, poison ivy, burns, scratches and other surface infections. Also, as a powerful deodorant in vanishing cream form.

In bottles, 25c, 50c and $1 at drug stores

Zonite

Zonite Products Co., Women's Division MM15
250 Park Avenue, New York, N. Y.
Please send me free copy of the Zonite booklet or booklets checked below.

☐ Feminine Hygiene
☐ Use of Antiseptics in the Home

Please Print Name

Name.....
Address.....
City..... State.....
(In Canada: 165 Dufferin Street Toronto)

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Next Month

He Married a Chorus Girl

Her son had made a mésalliance—had married a girl of the chorus—and the grille doors of Mrs. Vanderloom's Fifth Avenue home were closed irrevocably to her unwelcome daughter-in-law.

But even the most exclusive of homes may have a skeleton in one of its closets.

And quite opportunely Mrs. Vanderloom's skeleton walked out!

With what results you may read next month in this splendid story by that popular writer of short stories and novels,

Gordon Arthur Smith

Gordon Arthur Smith

The Other Unwritten Law

Here is a powerful story that travels the highways of emotion—where everybody lives. Sometimes for one cause, sometimes for another, but at least once in a lifetime, most men long for personal vengeance.

Talbot Wright availed himself of the so-called "unwritten law"—and found that he was facing the other *unwritten law. What is this other law?*

You can find an entirely new aspect of a world-old situation in next month's McClure's through reading this remarkable story by

Robert McBlair

$25,000—AND FAME OVERNIGHT

Innumerable letters, telegrams, telephone calls and comment in the newspapers show that the most lively interest is being taken in McClure's Twenty-five Thousand Dollar Prize Novel Contest. Readers of the magazine as well as aspiring authors are making frequent inquiries.

People already are beginning to ask, "When will the prize novel be published in McClure's?" One woman, telephoning into the office, said she was anxious not only to read the prize novel for her own interest and pleasure, but to express at this time her enthusiasm for the sort of prize that must distinctly advance the standards of American writing. The editor on the magazine end of that telephone call enjoyed a nice warm glow all day.

In offering so generous a reward, McClure's, in conjunction with its associates, Cosmopolitan Book Corporation and Cosmopolitan Productions, had exactly these two things in mind—to give its readers the very best fiction treat of the year 1927, and to furnish to writers a tangible incentive toward achieving magazine, book and motion picture fame all at once.

McClure's considers itself especially favored in having as judges of the contest three such notable authorities as Dr. Henry Van Dyke, Kathleen Norris and George Barr McCutcheon.

The rules of the contest are printed on page 104 of this issue, and a pamphlet containing them, together with stories of how Anne Parrish, Martha Ostenso and Margaret Wilson became prize novel winners, will be furnished gladly upon request. Such requests, accompanied by a stamped self-addressed envelope, should be addressed to the Contest Editors, McClure's, 119 West 40th street, New York City.

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The Regular Publication Date of McCLURE'S is the 17th of Every Month

PUSSYFOOT JOHNSON--

says:

"I Would Shoot to Kill---and I'd Make this Country BONE-DRY in 6 months!"

Pussyfoot Johnson — twenty years ago when as Chief Prohibition Agent he made all Indian Territory bone dry.

AUGUST

Also
SYLVIA THOMPSON
author of "The Hounds of Spring"
E. BARRINGTON
MARTHA OSTENSO
IRVIN S. COBB
MEREDITH NICHOLSON

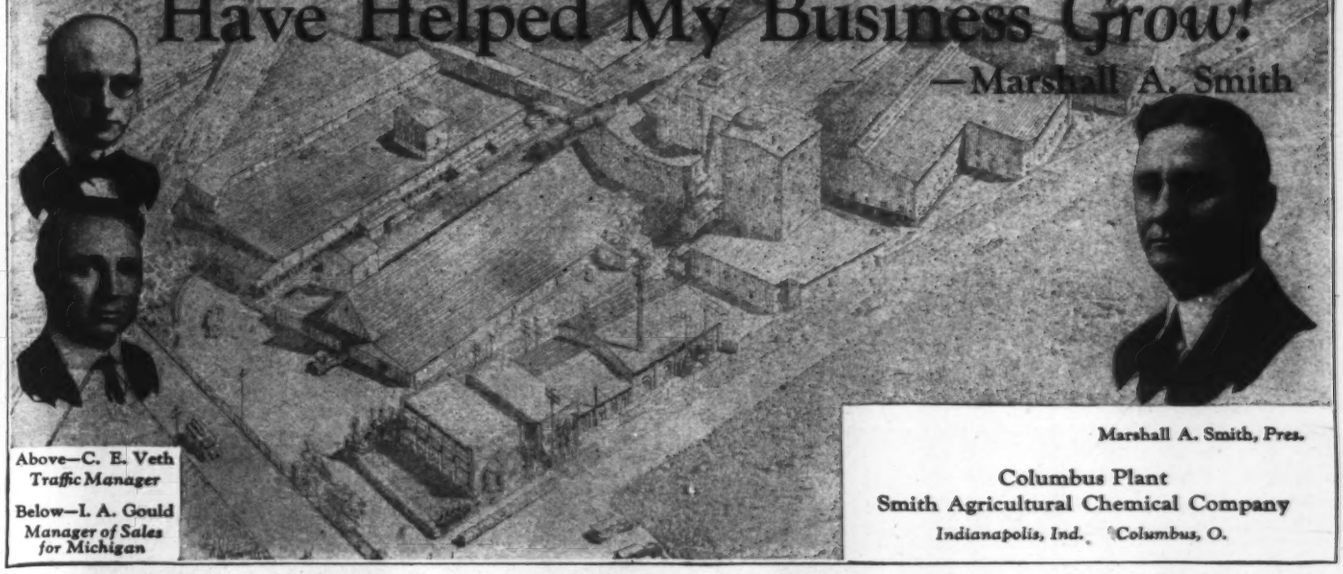
Hearst's International
combined with
Cosmopolitan

H. G. WELLS
THEODORE ROOSEVELT
KATHLEEN NORRIS
CORRA HARRIS
MONTAGUE GLASS
H. C. WITWER
and others

ON SALE NOW — — ALL NEWS-STANDS

These LaSalle-Trained Men Have Helped My Business Grow!

—Marshall A. Smith



Above—C. E. Veth
Traffic Manager

Below—I. A. Gould
Manager of Sales for Michigan

Marshall A. Smith, Pres.

Columbus Plant
Smith Agricultural Chemical Company
Indianapolis, Ind. *Columbus, O.*

Why I. A. Gould Received Two "Raises" and C. E. Veth a Salary-increase of 200%

FROM the great plants of the Smith Agricultural Chemical Company, at Columbus and Indianapolis, thousands of tons of fertilizer, animal foods and acids—six widely diversified products under the brand name Sacco—are shipped to all parts of the United States.

To sell products of this character and to arrange for their economical transportation calls for ability of a high order. Half-knowledge, snap-judgment, guess-work, quickly spell defeat for the man and heavy losses for the company.

Marshall A. Smith, head of this great enterprise, knows the importance of training—***recognizes what it means to have in his employ LaSalle-trained men.***

One of his employees—I. A. Gould—had been a farmer in Central Michigan. At the age of 48 he began with this company as a salesman—enrolling at the same time for LaSalle training in Modern Salesmanship. Within three years he had topped the list in Michigan and had been given entire charge of sales in that state, with a crew of men under his direction. In July, 1925, he writes, "I have increased my sales this past season 50%, and my salary has been raised twice since last October."

Another of Mr. Smith's employees—C. E. Veth—saw the need for a properly equipped traffic department—this as a result of LaSalle training in Traffic Management. So successfully did he put it into operation that during the year 1924 errors in freight bills ***totalling $10,600 in overcharges*** were detected and corrected before payment was made. To LaSalle, in a large measure, he directly credits a salary increase of 200 per cent.

"We can only attribute the rapid success of these two men," writes Mr. Smith, "to their energy and initiative, ***together with the practical knowledge gained thru the pursuit of LaSalle training.***"

Send for Free Copy "Ten Years' Promotion in One"

The men who have made such gratifying progress took first a simple step—***a step that requires only a 2c stamp and two minutes of their time.*** They sent for a free book—"Ten Years' Promotion in One," the book that has started thousands and thousands of men on the path to responsibility and power.

A copy of this book is yours for the asking—and with it a 64-page book outlining in detail the opportunities in the business field that most appeals to you, showing you how you can quickly turn them to your advantage. To many an earnest man these books have been worth their weight in gold—***they may be equally as valuable to you.*** It will certainly pay you to find out.

You have often thought that you would send for full particulars of the LaSalle Salary-Doubling Plan. This time—for the sake of a brighter future—ACT!

LaSalle Extension University
The World's Largest Business Training Institution

Two "Raises" Within Nine Months

"You'll be interested, I know, in the story of a middle-aged farmer who at 48 turned salesman and made good, thanks to LaSalle training in Modern Salesmanship.

"When I enrolled for LaSalle training, I had no idea of the benefits to be derived. My progress, however, has been steady—business has come easier—in fact I have increased my sales this past season 50%, and my salary has been raised twice since last October. Careful study of the LaSalle course has been a large factor in enabling me to do this, and I cannot praise it too highly."

(Signed) I. A. GOULD, Director of Sales for Michigan, Smith Agricultural Chemical Co.

A Salary-Increase of 200%

"When I took up your training, I held the position of Traffic Manager with the Smith Agricultural Chemical Company. As I progressed with the course I saw very clearly what a well-equipped traffic department could do for the company. My subsequent salary-increase of 200% is directly due to the successful working out of this undertaking—and that, in turn, is due to the hard work, study and application which I gave to your training in Traffic Management. Your course is one of the most complete in its line; and in technical information it far surpasses any other I have seen."

(Signed) C. E. VETH, Traffic Manager, Smith Agricultural Chemical Co.

LaSalle Extension University

THE WORLD'S LARGEST BUSINESS TRAINING INSTITUTION

FIND YOURSELF THRU LA SALLE!

LA SALLE EXTENSION UNIVERSITY Dept. 856-R CHICAGO

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- ☐ **Business Management:** Training for Official, Managerial, Sales and Departmental Executive positions.
- ☐ **Higher Accountancy:** Training for position as Auditor, Comptroller, Certified Public Accountant, Cost Accountant, etc.
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- ☐ **Personnel and Employment Management:** Training in the position of Personnel Manager, Industrial Relations Manager, Employment Manager, and positions relating to Employee Service.
- ☐ **Railway Station Management:** Training for position of Station Accountant, Cashier and Agent, Division Agent, etc.
- ☐ **Industrial Management:** Training for position in Works Management, Production Control, Industrial Engineering, etc.
- ☐ **Modern Business Correspondence and Practice:** Training for position as Sales or Collection Correspondent, Sales Promotion Manager, Mail Sales Manager, Secretary, etc.
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- ☐ **C. P. A. Coaching for Advanced Accountants.**

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The "AUTHOR! AUTHOR!" Page

The Most Romantic Year of Their Lives

As Told by McClure's Writers for August

WHICH year has been the most romantic in your life? If somebody suddenly asked you this question, what would pop into your mind?

Here are the responses that came from the authors whose stories appear in this issue of McClure's:

"All my years are romantic," says **Meigs O. Frost,** who lives in the glamorous city of New Orleans, "but one especially is outstanding. There was the year in college when I got my varsity letter in football, was elected class president, won my numerals at track, was on a winning debating team, and fell in love—and I thought earth held no more for any man." Mr. Frost is the author of *THE TEST.*

Realizing that no man may eat his cake and have it too, **Harvey Fergusson** believes in cutting the cake into small pieces. "There are romantic minutes," says the author of *HOT SATURDAY,* "and even romantic hours. But the perfection of human experience, which is the essence of romance, never holds up for a year. My romantic year is scattered in a thousand pieces."

Elliott White Springs

Although no aviator may agree, there is at least an undertone of romance in the characteristics of one who will fly 560 miles to attend a dinner. This is what **Elliott White Springs** did. He came by plane from Dayton, Ohio, to Mineola, Long Island, to attend a dinner, given at the Hotel Roosevelt in New York, inaugurating publication of the first issue of the new McClure's. Lieut. Springs' first story appeared in that issue. The second air story is *THE 18-CARAT ANGEL* in this number.

The author of *MARDI GRAS MADNESS* has chosen his fifteenth year as the most romantic. "That is the year," says **Edwin Dial Torgerson,** "when I read 'Sapho,' which was dedicated by Daudet to his sons when they should be twenty. I was fifteen. The unreal never will be so real again as on the threshold of adolescence."

THE author of *SUMMER BACHELORS* wants to live to see his hundredth birthday. "I really would like to see my hundredth birthday," says **Warner Fabian,** "because so many exciting and romantic things may happen between now and then!"

Here's a man who has experienced two years so romantic that he cannot choose between them. Says **Berton Braley:** "The *most* romantic year was 1924 when in four months I met, courted and married my wife. And 1925 was romantic too, for in July our son Ian arrived. A baby isn't so darned romantic of himself, being mostly work and worry, but this particular baby happens to be our first. And he really is a Stout Fella and a Good Lad." In 1926 the 1925 baby's dad writes a series of poems for McClure's—this month's being *THE BOBBER SHOP.*

"Romance is of the spirit," says **Hazlett Kessler,** author of *THE GIRL CALLED SIN.*

The author of *TESSIE TINGALING,* is a highly romantic person all the time. But undoubtedly the most vivid year of **Beth Retner's** experience was that in which she ran away from home. "Bowed under the weight of my savings, $302.35, I went forth to conquer new worlds, and arrived in Greenwich Village. But $302.35 can buy little more than a copy of Whistler, a dictionary, an antique bed, ten cans of tomato soup, a braided rug slightly frayed, a pot of red geraniums, a small dog (for a quarter, from some boys) and a bushel of potatoes. I lived on potatoes so long that I can't look a potato in the eye today!"

Not her most romantic year, but her most romantic moment, is the choice of **Helen Bishop.** "It was in Chicago," says the author of *THE HANDSOMEST MAN ON BROADWAY,* "on a bleak morning when the wind howled off the Lake like forty demons, and my spirits had sunk to zero. I opened a letter and found McClure's had bought my first story! That was one grand and glorious feeling. There's romance for you!"

More romance for everybody is the poem by **Gerald Beaumont.** It is called *THE LITTLE COURTIN' CAR.* 'Nough said!

There is no doubt about **Wallace Irwin's** most romantic year. The creator of *THE GAS MAN* votes unanimously for 1899. "In that year," he confesses, "I was expelled from college, worked in a redwood logging camp, found my first newspaper job in San Francisco, served my time as a Chinatown reporter, collected the material for 'The Letters of a Japanese Schoolboy,' and wrote a sonnet which attracted the attention of Ambrose Bierce. Meals were irregular during that spell, but life was always vivid."

Nor can there be much doubt about the romance in the life of **S. L. Rothafel** whose article this month is headed *STAND BY FOR ROXY.* His most romantic year undoubtedly was the twelvemonth during which he started showing motion pictures in the back room of a store in Forest City, Pa. The fact that he had to borrow chairs from the nearby local undertaker in order to seat his audience was a mere detail.

A baker's half dozen of the August contributors believe that "next year," the days just round the corner, hold the most romantic promise. **Ben Hecht** and **John Held, Jr.,** are two gentlemen who appear to hold such views. Mr. Hecht is the author of *THE COVETOUS MALE.* As for Mr. Held, he and *THAT McCLURE GIRL* get more and more romantic!

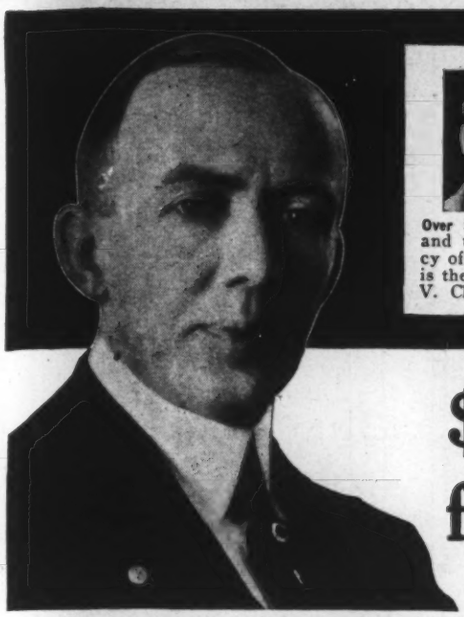
Another person who always sees something just a little more intriguing in the future is **E. Phillips Oppenheim,** author of *THE TWO SPINSTERS.* He would agree probably with **Mary Singer,** the author of *IF THERE MUST BE ROMANCE.* She says:

"I consider the most romantic year of my life the year that starts tomorrow! All that I have dreamed and hoped for may come true in the year beginning tomorrow."

The author of *DEAR DADDY,* whose pen name is **Lilith Benda,** looks forward to "next year, I suppose, always." And **Charles Divine,** who wrote *S-S-S-S-T,* votes for "that one year when you find somewhere in the world the brightest answer to your dreams." While as for **Nathalie Sedgwick Colby** all one need do is to read her delightful story, *THE NANINA HOUSE,* to realize she has great faith in "tomorrow."

A small farm in Connecticut is the dream of **James Kevin McGuinness.** There the author of *WHERE THE JAZZ BEGINS* plans to have a kennel of Airedales. "For a while my wife and I thought of Irish wolfhounds," he writes, "but we priced some at the Westminster Kennel Show last winter. They were $1,500 each. We agreed that neither of us was that Irish!"

ANOTHER man whose most romantic year has not begun yet is **Morris Gilbert,** author of *THE PETTING PARTY.* He doesn't seem very sure as to its probable date, but he is highly enthusiastic about its advent. "It will start," he says, "when my ship goes out for the island of Ceylon. In the ship's company will be Sir John Falstaff, Zuleika-Dobson, Little Buttercup; most of the persons in 'The Polygots,' including Uncle Lucy; Clarence Darrow; my helpmeet, and some of the clientele of Fred Paine's Bar in the *rue Pigalle.*"



Over $10,000 a Year and the presidency of his company is the record of C. V. Champion, Ill.

$1,000 In 30 Days made by Hartle, a R. R. Mail Clerk for ten years.

$13,500 First Year is what A. H. Ward made after taking his sales training.

$554.37 In 7 Days made by F. Wynn —over $400 second week.

$5,000 to $10,000 a Year for Men Who Read This Ad

J. E. Greenslade
President of the National Salesmen's Training Association.

Let Me Make You a Master Salesman! *This New Easy Way*

I DON'T care what you are now or what you think. The Association of which I am president will take you in short, easy steps and make a Master Salesman of you, put you in the same class with the big pay men who have all the good things of life.

Many have thought that Salesmen were "born." And that idea has kept many men from succeeding. But this Association of Master Salesmen has proved that any man can be taught the rules and principles that make men Master Salesmen. And you know as well as I do that Salesmen top the list of money-makers. They are the producers and you can be one of them.

Easy as A, B, C

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You can learn these principles at home in a short period of pleasant, inspiring study. And once you have mastered these secrets of Master Salesmanship, you can take advantage of the employment department of the Association without charge. They will help you select and secure a position as soon as you are qualified and ready.

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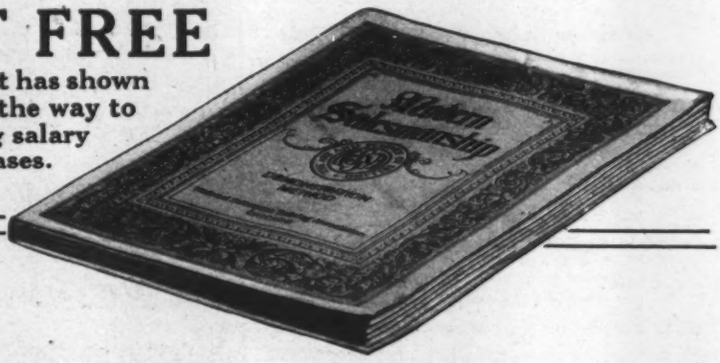

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What You May Expect

A Wealth of Short Stories is Promised for September McCLURE'S

"The Lay of the Last Mitchell"
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is full of laughs from start to finish.

"NO FOOL, ELAINE!"
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Mary Singer
is about a pretty manicurist and a gentleman who is disguised, not by the usual mask, but by a pair of gorgeous yellow shoes . . . . . Since all the world loves a lover every reader will enjoy

"I'M KISSING YOUR HAND"
by
Clara Belle Thompson

A brilliant story about a sophisticated man of the world who finds he is not so sophisticated as he thought is

"A Marriage of Inconvenience"
by
Rayner Seelig

And there are ten more equally splendid short stories in addition to the serials and feature articles.

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Innumerable novels have been written about the gaiety of New York society in winter. Here is the story of New York's gay summers, when the women of the families who are the center of the city's famous social season are vacationing in Europe, the mountains, or by the sea—leaving their men at home in their offices. In the smart restaurants and exclusive clubs the dining and dancing goes on just as gaily and sumptuously as ever. The men who frequent these places are the same men the head waiters greet so deferentially all winter, but the women are not. They are different. Just as beautiful, just as witty, just as charming—but other women. Warner Fabian's new novel, now running as a serial in McCLURE'S, is a remarkable picture of this exotic summer life in New York. The high point of the story, a most unusual and thrilling situation, occurs in the September instalment.

Be Sure To Get
September McCLURE'S
Out August 17.

The Bobber Shop

By
BERTON BRALEY
and
ARTHUR WILLIAM BROWN

I CRAVED a doggy shingle for the tresses on my roof,
According to the fashion that is smartest.
And I said, "I want a 'Bobber'—not the ordinary goof
But a 'Tonseur' who is rated as an artist."
"Check," my friends said. "Go to François—very high hat, but a shark.
He's the ritziest of bobbers, he's a master.
When *he's* given you a shingle everybody will remark,
'She's a Vanderbilt, a Belmont, or an Astor!'"

So I saw his secretary—don't you *love* that—and she said
"Ah! A sitting with the Maestro? I'll arrange it.
But you'll have to wait a little, he's booked seven weeks ahead
With a list so full I simply cannot change it."

Came the day of my appointment, and M. François did his stuff.
How he postured as he scissored and he clipped me!
And the tax was fifteen dollars; but his work was smooth enough
So I somehow didn't realize he'd gypped me.
Fifteen cases for a shingle! What a bonzing I had got!
But, I thought, at least he is a virtuoso.
For an ordinary hair-cut may be good, or not so hot,
But a Francois bob's the berries—and you *know* so!

Then I went to shop for notions. As I entered at the door
You can figure what a walloping my pride got—
For each wren behind the counter in that five and ten cent store
Had a shingle-bob precisely such as I'd got!

By HELEN BISHOP

The Handsomest Man

HE WAS, in the days before the war, undoubtedly the handsomest young actor on Broadway—and probably the worst! He was described as "handsome as a Greek god"; but even that fails to do him justice. Those young Greeks may have been all right in the flesh, but in marble they are a little too placid and smug—and cold. His was another kind of masculine beauty: the kind, as one woman remarked, that catches at your heart. Many women must have been affected similarly, for he always played to packed houses composed largely of women. If he'd had to get by on his histrionic ability alone, he would have landed within a week on the cold sidewalk of the longest street in the world. Critics who might have overlooked lack of ability in a less handsome man were driven to a frenzy of ridicule.

But Cameron needed no critic to point out to him that he was a "ham." He knew it himself; for he had a rare intelligence and a discriminating taste that kept him miserable. Curiously enough, too, tucked away inside him was a delicious sense of humor and a genuine flair for comedy.

"You could be a wow if you'd only get this crazy idea out of your nut about being a second Mansfield or Sothern," his friend Joe Levy, the producer, told him. "You're damned funny when you want to be, and you're a fine dancer when you keep yourself in trim. As a dancing comedian you'd knock 'em cold. But no, you want to go mooning around the stage in tights! You! As a romantic actor, you're a fine bicycle rider. Why don't you get hep to yourself?"

He was thinking of all this one night as he sat in Barbara Benson's dressing-room watching her make up for her rôle in "Beyond the Pale," a play which was hanging up records on Broadway those days. Even then her little feet were planted firmly on the first rungs of the ladder which has since led her to her great place in the sun. She had a small part, a little, beautiful drab of the London streets. Perhaps you remember her as she made her first entrance: her absurd, bedraggled rig, the hat with its tawdry feathers, the run-down, once elegant slippers. She stood there leaning against the door, gave that little whiskey-cigaret cough—a masterpiece, that cough—turned her lovely, haunting face to the audience, and spoke her first line in the voice which has since made theater history. She was a drab of the London streets—and by sheer force of the fire that burned within her, she was also beauty—rapture—whatever you call it—the thing that once in a blue moon you find, and that takes you out of yourself.

She had the gift; and Cameron didn't have it. And more than that, he knew it; and she knew it.

She came off after that first scene from a hushed house, which after a moment broke into uncontrolled applause. It happened every night; it was nothing new to her. She knew quite simply that she was destined for greatness. It didn't matter to her that she was not allowed to take a bow. She left the audience applauding behind her and forgot it. She tossed the Cockney hat on the couch, and immediately sat down before her dressing table, and began improving her make-up. Through the mirror, though, she glanced at Cameron and smiled. All Cameron's heart came up into his eyes as he smiled back at her.

It hurt her, his smile. Other women would have given anything to make that look come into his eyes. But she

The very shadow on the blanched back

on Broadway

—but the Woman He Loved Refused Him, till the Night He Played the Fool

drop behind him capered in an ecstasy of mirth.

wasn't ready for it, didn't want it. And he didn't want other women! Well, that was life—you could always have what you wanted just when you didn't want it.

What did she want? Perhaps only to ease the thing inside her that drove her on and never gave her peace. If it had not been for the torment of the force within her, she could have loved him ardently. Even now a wave of emotion sometimes swept over her, when she thought of him. But the other love was the stronger. Love and marriage were not for her—not yet at any rate; and desperately, again and again, she told him so.

She would have to tell him so again tonight, she was thinking. But tonight, she realized, she didn't want to tell him. Perhaps she was tired. Perhaps the beckoning, shining path of fame seemed suddenly not so bright. At any rate as she turned to him he sensed her mood, and without a word he picked her up in his arms. He carried her to the one big chair the dressing-room boasted and, sitting down, held her close against his heart. Very gently he kissed her—in the hollow of her throat, so that her make-up wouldn't be disturbed—patted her hair, murmured words of endearment. She felt his lips on the back of her neck and a shiver ran through her. She heard him whisper:

"Oh, darling, I love you so. Say you love me a little."

"I do, sweet, you know I do. Only——"

His arms tightened around her.

"I know—but don't talk—— Just let me hold you here for a minute."

She thought suddenly: "If only he could make love like that on the stage! Yet if he could I suppose I'd hate it." And then she let herself relax against him till it was time for her reentrance.

Having slapped on the cockney hat, she hurried to the wings

and he followed her. He saw her in a flash change from the tired girl who had rested against his heart into the actress. She walked on, away from him, into that white glare that shut out everything else. And watching her he thought:

"Barbara loves me — but she loves that more. Not that I blame her — she's got the ball at her feet. A hell of a lot of good it would do her to tie herself up to a ham like me. I've got to get over this. It'll drive me cuckoo. I've got to get over it."

But, of course, he didn't get over it. He got worse and worse, till every time they were together they made themselves miserable arguing the thing.

"If you'd only tell me you don't love me," he said to her one night, desperately, "I'd let you alone. But you do love me." And he took her in his arms, and gave her a little shake. "And God help me I can't get over loving you."

He was terrified that she would pity him--he could not meet her eyes.

And angrily then, for it was hard fighting both him and herself, she cried:

"I won't tell you I don't love you—I do. But I can't marry you—if I weren't me, I could. But don't you see, I've got to go on, Bob—I've *got* to!"

He was quiet for a few minutes, his face averted. When he turned to her there was a look in his eyes that she had never seen there before—the look of a man who marches up to the inevitable.

"Let's get this out in the open—get it straight. You know I'm a rotten actor. You're on the way to being a star. You can't tie yourself up to some one who's not as good as you are. That's it, isn't it?"

Barbara had a curiously truthful little face, and looking at her he saw the answer to his question; saw the tears start. He took both her hands; kissed them.

"Don't cry, sweet — tell me the truth. It's best in the end, you know."

"Darling — I couldn't do it to you. That's honest. I couldn't have you one of those pathetic creatures who's just the star's husband." He held her hands tighter at that. She leaned towards him, all her honest, lovely soul in her eyes. "You'd come to hate me. And I'd hate you. I'm feminine in that —I'd want my husband to be as good, or better, at his job than I was at mine. It wouldn't work. Whatever love we had for each other would just be spoiled. Let's keep it as it is."

She was crying sobbingly, as a child cries, and of course he took her in his arms and comforted her: told her to forget it, that they'd keep it just as it was. But he knew better. He knew that love is the one thing, perhaps, that you never can keep as it is. When he left her that night, he realized he was leaving her for good. How he'd live, what he'd do, he didn't know. But he wouldn't upset her any more with his futile love-making.

And then out of a gathering sky the great gods offered the solution. He woke, after [*Continued on page 98*]

Drawing by George Van Werveke

The opening night! Excitement, laughter, exclamations. "Hurry—you haven't got your mouth on yet!"

PAUL hissed loudly to attract her attention.

BY CHARLES DIVINE

"S-S-S-S-T!"

The Story of a Hiss that Changed Young Love's Future

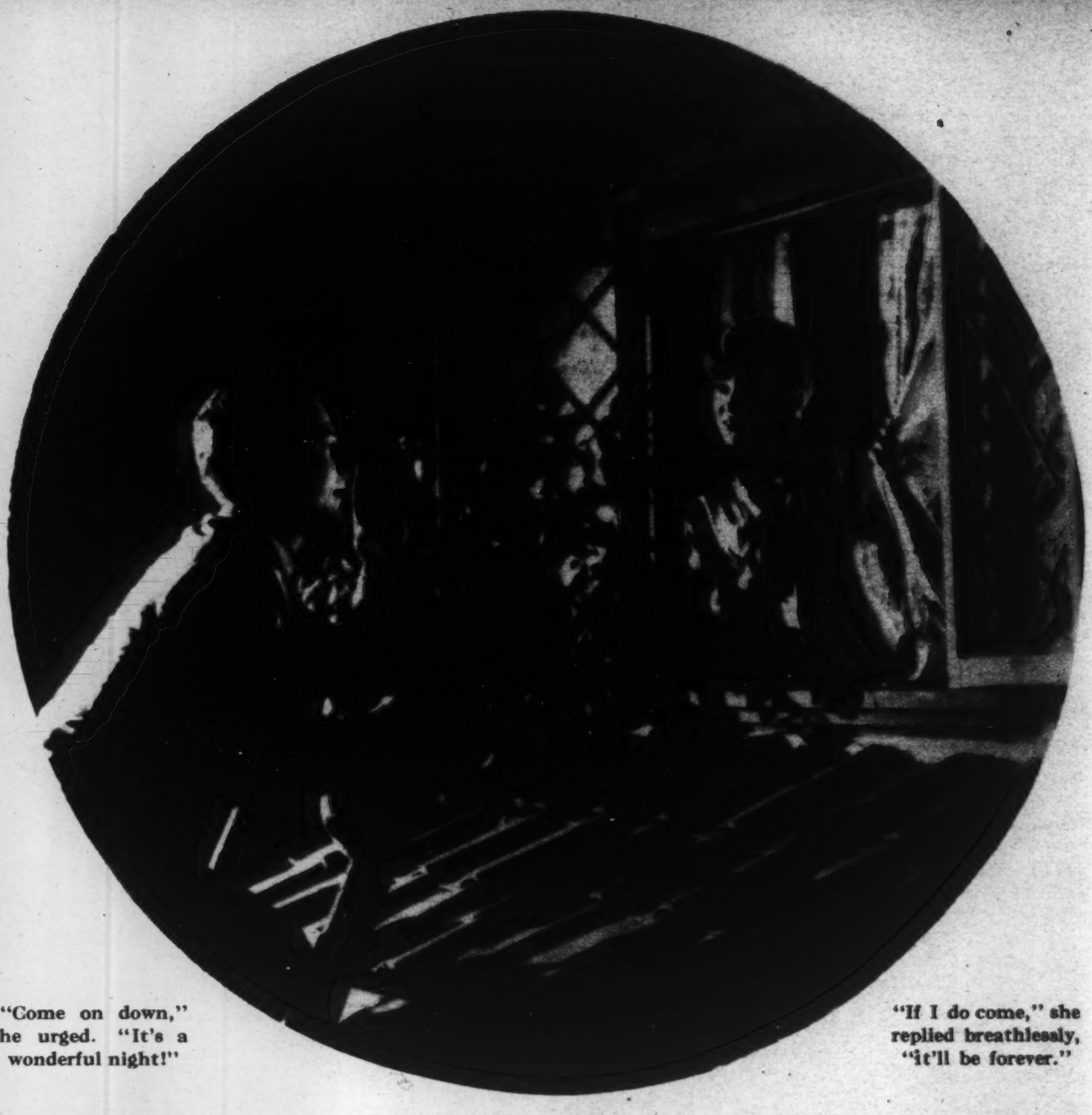
AT FOUR o'clock Dorothy Blair stood in a men's furnishings' store in Main Street buying golf socks for her fiancé, Paul Wickham, and wondering if that was the size worn by Owen Rutledge, who was *not* her fiancé although he had wanted to be. At four-fifteen she checked Paul's shaving cream off her list, and found herself wondering if that was the kind Owen used. His face was always so smooth and warm, and she remembered the clean, soapy smell she had caught close to him more than once. He *had* kissed her . . . many times. But she mustn't think of that now, she told herself.

At five-thirty, encumbered with bundles which she spilled in a cascade around her as she sank into a chair in the Central Hotel waiting-room, she was so weary that she gave no thought to anything except the sense of solace invading her as she lay back in the chair, sighing. She didn't care if her plaited blue dress did wrinkle! She was even heedless of her own charming reflection in the mirror opposite, showing a young woman with two pretty, pursed lips, an alluring oval face, and blue eyes so thickly lashed that everybody—except Owen Rutledge—thought they were black.

Her wandering attention was caught by the conversation of a group of fashionably dressed people near her. They were New Yorkers who had stopped at the Central to dine on their trip back to the city. They laughed a great deal and were commenting vivaciously on what they had seen that day.

There was something about them Dorothy admired, though she did not know exactly what it was—whether their understanding camaraderie or their friendly languor as they wearied of talk and lounged in their chairs. "I guess I'm too tired to concentrate," she decided.

Not until Paul signaled to her did she realize that he was standing at the door across the room. His arms were filled with bundles, his straw hat tight on his head above



"Come on down," he urged. "It's a wonderful night!"

"If I do come," she replied breathlessly, "it'll be forever."

his serious, level eyes. He was evidently impatient.

"S-s-s-s-t!" he hissed, and she saw him jerk his head towards the street, beckoning.

She got to her feet, gathering her packages about her, and followed his retreating figure to the car.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, after their packages had been stowed away, "I forgot something!"

"Better run back and get it while I see if I have enough gas."

She hurried back to the waiting-room. As she was picking up the forgotten package she heard the New Yorkers talking about her. They evidently hadn't seen her come in.

"Isn't that ridiculous?" commented one of the women. "Imagine a woman standing for that!"

"That's the way you call waiters in a French café," observed one of the men, "by hissing at them."

WITH a gasp of surprise Dorothy beheld the other man lean forward and hiss at the woman near him, in imitation of Paul's signal.

"S-s-s-s-t! S-s-s-s-t!"

"That wouldn't work with me, Dick," replied the woman. "I'm not your pet poodle."

They laughed.

Dorothy retreated hastily from the room, her face red and her eyes angry. She felt unutterably humiliated.

"Cads!" she said to herself. Instead of admiring them now, she hated them furiously. "They think we're hicks up here in Lesterville!"

At the same time she knew—and that was what hurt—that they were justified in pouncing upon this incident as the butt of their satire. How automatically she had responded to Paul's "s-s-s-s-t"! She realized suddenly that Paul had often hissed at her before, and she had obeyed without a thought. It was one of Paul's time-saving devices.

Now as she got into the car beside him, she sat with her lips pressed tightly together, her thoughts racing back over other disturbing incidents.

Her silence and the set expression on her face caused Paul to say:

"Buck up, old girl. You're tired out, that's all." He patted her back with hearty affection. "This ride'll do you good. Country air. I'd be fagged out, too, if I had to teach a roomful of kids the difference between a stalactite and a stalagmite." He reached over and started the car. "There's a box of candy in one of my packages for you."

"Thanks, Paul."

"And tonight you'll get a good rest at the Budds, out where it's cool and quiet. You'll wake up in the morning a new woman."

That last phrase of his startled her. A new woman!

"I'm not tired—not physically," she said. "It's something else."

Paul after shifting gears at the last busy traffic corner and turning into the straight road to the country, pounded his right hand on the wheel emphatically as he said:

"Today I made that New York man see my idea! I sold it to him right when he didn't want to be sold anything. That's why I asked you to do the shopping. I had this appointment. Then Tom Mulder came in from Buffalo. It was funny, dear, but that little runt from New York thought he was going to tell me what to do! I knew he couldn't stand up against my arguments." Paul laughed. "I guess I bullied him into it. Feel better, dear?"

SHE answered in a murmur which was lost in the rush of wind as the car followed the cement road down the hill past the fresh green fields on either side. When she spoke again it was to remark:

"Owen Rutledge is going to be at the Budds' this week-end."

Immediately she saw a cloud cross Paul's face. As a teacher of physical geography in the high school, she knew all varieties of clouds, and this one on Paul's countenance was distinctly cumulus, heavy with heat. It gave her a momentary feeling of elation. He was still jealous of Owen! He hadn't forgotten that they had been rivals. Had been? The past tense struck her oddly, making her feel that there was something of age in her romance. Had time already touched it? For a whole long year she had been engaged to Paul, and still he "didn't see his way clear" to marrying yet.

Of course, she was only twenty-five, but the suppression of her impatience, the acceptance of Paul's matter of fact attitude towards "this proposition of marriage" had been so difficult that often she had lain awake nights with a weary, hurt heart. Could she blame him, she asked herself. Was he selfish, as Winifred Tompkins said! Or was he merely practical and far-sighted. He wanted to wait and accumulate a bank account worth banking on, and not "walk out of the marriage license bureau into the pawnbroker's." Didn't he speak frequently, and with satisfaction, of the nest-egg he was collecting? Every time he shaved himself he dropped a quarter in a box at home. Then he gave her the money and made her put it in the Chenango Valley Savings Bank.

"Owen, eh?" he considered, slowing the car down to the easy gait with which he could maintain a self-satisfying conversation. "I thought Owen had gone out of town."

"I guess he has been away. I haven't seen him in ages."

The cloud vanished from Paul's face. "The more, the merrier!" he said heartily, though Dorothy felt that his statement lacked conviction.

A moment later he went on: "Tom Mulder is a fellow I like. I had a good chin-wag with him this afternoon. You remember me telling you about Tom? We used to be kids together out on the farm." Taking his right hand from the wheel, he extended it thoughtfully along his cheek, the index finger reaching almost to his very large ear and pushing the clean-shaven flesh of his face upward, making wrinkles around his reminiscent eyes. "Tom used to say he never saw a kid handle horses the way I did. Give me any team of horses—I didn't care what kind—and I could handle them. Why, Dorothy, I remember once my father had a team of dappled grays, spirited live animals. He used to use a J. I. C. bit on them. Do you know what a J. I. C. bit is? I'll explain. It had two rings on each side and a double rod between, and when you pulled on the reins it raised hob with their mouths. Well my father wanted me to drive the team to the county fair to enter them for an exhibition prize. He couldn't go himself that day, so he asked me. 'All right,' I said, 'I'll go if you give the team a bar bit.' 'A bar bit?' he said. 'You can't handle those horses with a bar bit!' 'Yes, I can. I won't take them to the fair with any other,' I told him. So he gave them a bar bit and I drove the team to the fair and put them through figure eight's and a lot of other stunts—and won first prize! Tom Mulder was with me. He's never forgotten that day. He never saw anybody, he says, that could handle horses the way I do."

Under her breath Dorothy said "I'm not a horse," and fell to thinking of the difference between Paul and Owen. Paul had the stronger personality. That was it. That was why she had chosen him instead of Owen. Paul was a leader. He wanted to go ahead. Owen was content to trudge along with you. Yet now, with the incident in the hotel waiting-room still fresh in her mind, she had violent doubts about the quality of Paul's leadership.

"Owen is too easy-going," she repeated to herself, as if realizing subconsciously that only by exhaustive repetition could she convince herself of this. "He loves doing nothing with great charm. I suppose that's why some people think he's lazy!"

"Why so quiet?" demanded Paul. "Come on, speak up!"

When Paul stopped the car on the top of the last hill to light a cigaret, she told him the reason for her silence.

"Why Dorothy!" he exclaimed. "You never complained about that before."

"I never realized it before. It—it makes me feel like a pet poodle, being hissed at that way." Her voice broke. She was trying her best to control her speech, but something rose in her throat and choked her, making her words sound childishly emotional. "It's not only that, Paul. That is a symbol of so much more."

"Symbol?" he echoed. "Much more? What?"

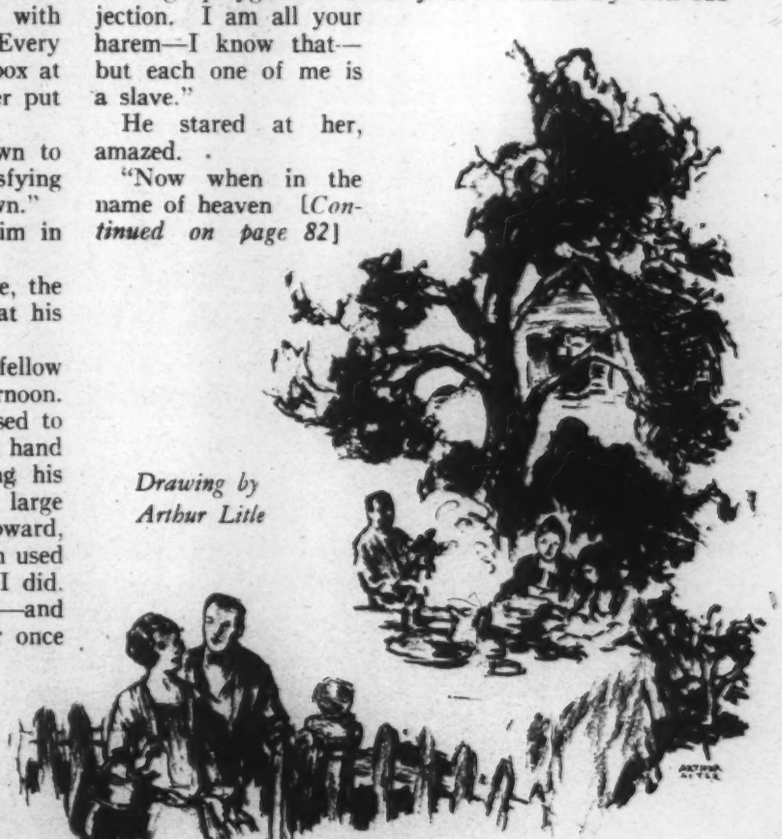
"Well—you do treat me as a kind of possession. You make me feel as if I were in a harem——"

"A harem? How can you say that? You know darn well I don't run around with other girls!"

"Oh, I don't mean your morals, Paul. I know there's nothing—polygamous about you! I mean my own subjection. I am all your harem—I know that—but each one of me is a slave."

He stared at her, amazed.

"Now when in the name of heaven [*Continued on page 82*]



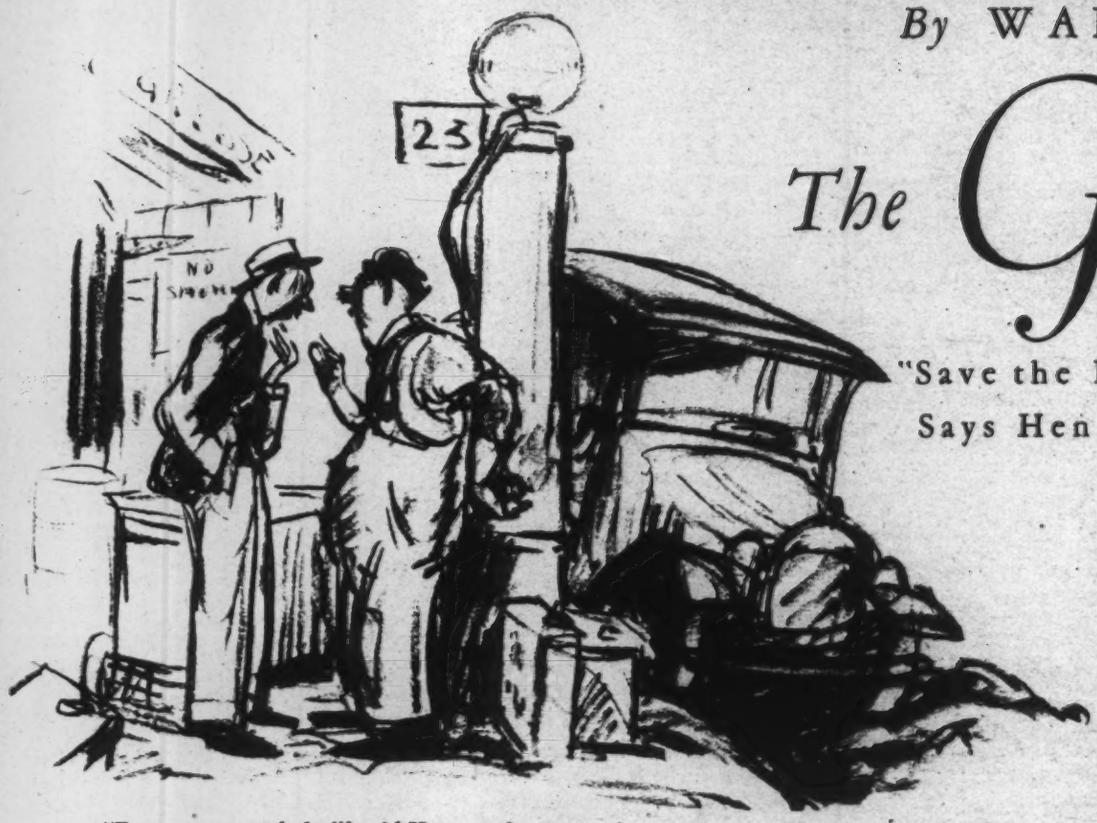
Drawing by Arthur Litle

They left the others to go to the well for water.

By WALLACE

The GAS

"Save the Dollars," Says Hen Dall—



"Economy—attababy!" said Hen, as the gas tank ran over.

"IT WOULD be cheaper in the long run," said Mr. Pinkus, having stopped his flivver with a dull thud in a shell-crater beside Hen Dall's red gas tank. "In the long run it would be cheaper for you to mend those holes than to cover 'em up like so many death-traps."

"A penny saved is a penny earned, Brother Pinkus," replied Hen Dall, loosening a hose coiled stiffly like a frozen boa constrictor. "And how much gas this morning, Brother Pinkus?"

"If I took all you carry on your lungs," said Brother Pinkus savagely as he got out of the flivver, "I could run a dirigible from here to Hunalulu and back again. All I want's a tank full."

Hen Dall, poking his hose around the back of the car, inquired innocently, "What size tank have you got, Brother Pinkus? Quart or pint? Oh, here y'are, cutie!" Then as he sprang to crank up the red pump he continued without interruption:

"Remember what I toldya about a penny saved is a penny earned. Ain't that the truth! Every time I don't mend a chuck hole I save five dollars. That big one saves me ten. Count 'em for yesself. Yer a business man, Brother, and yotta know how much money in the bank that makes for me.

"Yessir. If the Administration didn't never discover nothing else, it got a fistful of plain truth when it found Economy. The road to wealth, Brother Pinkus." The tank of the car was now running over, at Brother Pinkus' expense, but Hen Dall took this lightly. "Yessir. Jess lookit Big Business. Now there's the Standard Oil. I'm watching that becuz me and John D's gonna hook up together pretty soon. Does John D go around tossing away dimes? Nossir. He saves 'em for his caddies.

"What became of that two dollar bill?"

"Madam was a-shaving the whiskers off a bearded lady."

"Save the dollars and the dimes'll take care of the'selves. Y'abetcha! Economy is the road ta wealth. Attababy! Look around ya, Bro Pinkus, if ya got eyes ta see. Lookit how that idea has primeated the whole Nation. Lookit the girls. Last year they saved enough on skirts alone to reduce the income tax twenty per cent."

"They made it up on stockings," grumbled Brother Pinkus.

IRWIN

MAN

"—and the Dimes'll take Care of The'selves."

Drawings by
AUGUST HENKEL

"Every year Lottie deals Grover a pair o' twins."

"Not so fast, neighbor, Not so fast. Lookit the theatrical shows, if ya got the price. Last week was my twentieth wedding university, so I took the wife. Her name's Japonica—I call 'er Jap to make 'er wild. I took Jap to see 'Indescretions of 1926.' She liked it fine till the end of the first act when she fainted and hadda be took out. 'Gosh!' she says, 'twelve of them minks didn't have no stockings on, and several other things.' 'Yotta be ashamed, Jap,' says I. 'I am, and thassa truth,' says she. 'Yotta be ashamed,' I says, 'to call down a lotta woiking girls for casting away the frills and silken frivolities that has made the world too expensive to live in since the days of Adam when Eve had some sense and got 'er clothes and 'er eats off the same tree.'"

"How much gas did you give me?" broke in Mr. Pinkus anxiously.

But Hen Dall was concerned with other things. "Funny bout the ladies," he mused. "Trouble with most of 'em is that when they start to economize they try it first on the Old Man.

"Now there's Jap. Wednesday night she said she wisht she'd married a real man, so I took 'er to see Valentino so she'd know how a real man acts when he gits a million a year to act that way. Brother Pinkus, it was beautiful. There was Val with his sweetheart in his arms, standing under a bower of smilax buds. Caption: CAME THE DAWN.

"She's been using my safety razor."

"I jest set there with tears running down like a leaky radiator. Oh love, young love! It reminded me of the time when Jap and me got engaged—setting on a brick-pile out backa the garage . . . Then on come the lights, and I seen Jap, looking at me sorta deep and passionate. 'Whacha thinking about, girlie?' I says, and she says, 'Hen, what become of that two dollar bill I give you last Satdy to git change at the drug store?'

"Then I knew that Economy had came to stay in our little flat. And that's a lot worse'n housecleaning, because when the wife starts housecleaning I can move to Snell's Pool Parlor and shoot away my brains till it's over. This morning Jap ast if I couldn't find a cigar cheaper than seven cents and I said sure I could find lots of 'em, but they're illegal now that folks has stopped burning soft coal. She's been using my safety razor becuz she says she can't afford a corn-knife, and in the same breath she's beefing becuz I blow thirty cents a week on a barber. 'How can you talk that way,' I says, 'standing there in a forty-two cent pair o' silk stockings?'

"Trouble with women in arguments is they don't keep ther heads. They git so [*Continued on page 89*]

The flivver was leaping from chuck hole to chuck hole.

Sometimes the Spirit

of a

COURTIER

Hides Beneath

the Jacket

of a

LAUNDRYMAN

By Beth A. Retner

TESSIE TINGALING

THIS time she was running away for good. They'd never find her, she told herself over and over again, not even Gyp the Dandy who had twice before brought her back with him. "I'll not go back!" she sobbed and ran with all her strength down the dark narrow street.

It was raining. The drops fell heavily like old men thumping about in thick boots. The street grew more dark and more narrow and went slinking around the corner on evil business of its own. Somewhere on a fire-escape two cats screamed at one another, and a woman being beaten cried out in the night.

Tessie wasn't afraid of the night. She was only afraid of Gyp the Dandy whom she sometimes loved and sometimes hated, and of the Mackeys who lived in the black house where rough men met.

There was Long Mackey, the fierce one, and Short Mackey, the cripple, who pinched Tessie vindictively when she wouldn't run to do his bidding. Then there was Buck Tooth, the old hag who ran the house, and could hold more liquor than Long Mackey and Short Mackey, both.

When Gyp the Dandy grew tired of her she would go back to the Mackeys, until they grew tired of her too. They would come to her cot and drag her in her nightdress out into the room where men drank and swore and killed each other for the sake of a little amusement. And if she refused to drink with them they would throw the stuff in her face.

Once there was a scene, and the police came and took them all away—Tessie, too. Tessie came out of the pen feeling a hundred years old in spite of what Buck Tooth, the old woman, told her. Buck Tooth said that she was no more than eighteen. But there were a great many things the old woman wasn't sure of. She wasn't sure of Tessie's name for one thing. Sometimes it would be Tessie Jones, sometimes it would be Tessie Tabor, and sometimes, when she was dead sober, she confessed that it was just Tessie, because, she would add with a leer, no one knew who her father was.

Running now in the black night, with the rain full on her face, set Tessie to thinking. Soon it would all be over, all those years behind her, and the ugly ones ahead of her. Tied into a bulky bundle and dropped quietly over the pier where the fat river sat waiting.

Bits of those years came back to Tessie disconnectedly as she ran along. The time that Buck Tooth made her sit up and beg for a plaything she wanted, when she was a kid; and then fought her for it afterward.

The time she had quarreled with Buck Tooth over a cheap pearl necklace. Long Mackey had taken it away, after hitting Tessie on the head with a beer bottle. Every now and then the headache of that pain came back to her, sending her spinning as a paper pinwheel spins in a strong wind. Her head was beginning to spin now. Three more streets, Tessie told herself, running head down, breathing heavily. Three more streets with wooden docks at the end of the third. Soon there would be two more streets and then one more street, and then the great empty docks

TESSIE crouched in the doorway as the dark bodies of her pursuers hurtled past.

with the water slapping against them. She would only need to step off, as one steps off a curbing.

All at once she sensed steps, steps behind her, running too. She could hear them plainly above the wild beat of the rain. They sounded like the hollow rap-a-tap of drums on parade days. The steps came closer and closer. Soon they would catch up to her and turn her back to that black house and the black doings in it. Would they? No! No! No! Tessie half stumbled, half flung herself into a low doorway. She made a shadow in the dim corner, scarcely breathing as the dark bodies hurtled past her toward the river—as black and shapeless in the gray night as clots of mud flung by an angry hand.

The pain began knocking in her head. She knew that in another moment she would tumble over and forget everything. When it happened at the Mackey house they rolled her under the tables, out of their way. She felt herself slipping and reached out. Her fingers caught at a doorknob and rattled it faintly. She was sinking, down, down. One second more and she would be gone altogether.

Suddenly, as if in a dream, the door of the shop opened for her and a solid gold square of light flared in her face.

The last thing she remembered was a gentle voice saying: "What's the matter, lady? What's the matter, lady?" The voice was softer than the couch under her that caught her.

Tessie went into housekeeping in the two back rooms of Tingaling's laundry. Here she became a self-appointed queen, with a room to herself. Tingaling slept in the kitchen.

The night she had come still seemed like a dream to her. She remembered that she had found herself lying on a cot, with a yellow man bending over her, holding a tiny porcelain bowl to her lips.

"Oh!" she had exclaimed. "Oh!" and she had hid her face with her hands.

But in that flash she had caught a quick picture of the small room, its sputtering gas jet banded with blue and yellow rings like a miniature aurora borealis, lighting up the place, mean, scant, but spotless. Everything looked yellow, as if King Midas had turned it all to gold. Yet none of it as yellow as the amber forehead of the little man bending over her.

He had said to her gently: "I won't hurt you, lady. Honest, I won't!" And when she had burst into tears, he didn't put his fingers on her. He merely repeated in a soft whisper: "Don't cry, lady, please don't cry!"

Tessie looked up. The amber forehead seemed less like amber to her the second time she looked. There was a short forest of black hair growing on top of his head, like dwarfed oaks, stiff as the bristles on a hand-brush.

"I guess I better go home!" she had said, addressing herself to the top of his head.

He lifted his face until it was on a line with her eyes. It was a small thin face, with its skin stretched as tight as yellow parchment on a frame, and so smooth that it

seemed a child's. He had small, almond-shaped eyes—at first she had thought them black but later she discovered that they were a very deep earth brown. His tapering fingers reminded her of Jubilee Jim's, who sometimes played the piano at the Mackey house.

"I better go home!" she repeated, and sighed.

"I, myself, will take you!" he offered in precise English, his almond eyes widening.

Tessie suddenly remembered that she had no home. The thought robbed her of her self-assurance.

"I—I——" and she stopped limply, letting one leg hang over the edge of the cot where she had dropped it, reluctant to put the other leg down too. If she stood up on her feet there would be no way out of it but to go. The thought set her to sniffing again, little short quick sniffs of self-pity. But when, between sniffles, she lifted her face to her host it wore a careless smile of bravado.

The small eyes intent upon her seemed to wince imperceptibly, yet the Chinaman merely lowered his lids with a discreetness that was to be admired. "You stay here tonight!" said the narrow, colorless mouth. "And tomorrow when the sun shines again you can go home!"

But when tomorrow came and a bright sun with it, Tessie made no motions to depart, and Tingaling very politely refrained from broaching the subject. She had slept soundly, except just at dawn when she fancied she heard footsteps in her room. When she woke later she understood the reason of them, for there were all her clothes nicely washed and ironed, and spread out upon two chairs beside her bed.

Tessie was quite touched. Nobody had ever been so kind to her before. She stepped into her starched petticoat and into her dark red dress—with all traces of rain removed from the hem. There was a red velvet poppy on the bureau, and she pulled it through her black hair as she walked shyly to the doorway which led to the shop.

"Hello there!" she called, one hand coquettishly patting the red poppy into place.

The figure in black wheeled around slowly. "Good morning!" he answered in a thin voice and nodded his head.

Tessie came forward with a smile. She was running her fingers up and down the pleats of her dress. "Thanks for cleaning me up!" she chirped rather awkwardly, and then, collecting her poise, she jumped up on the wooden counter to watch him work.

He was sending the blunt nose of a hot iron up and down gentlemen's collars with a steady motion of hand and elbow and iron that did not waste a single stroke.

After she had spelled out the name that was inside out on the front window, Tessie remarked rather flippantly: "I know why your name is Tingaling!"

The busy little iron did not stop for a single moment but proceeded briskly about its business.

"It's Tingaling because that's the sound the door-bell makes, ain't it?" and she laughed, swaying back and forth on the edge of the counter like a red flower before the wind.

"Of course that's it!" he retorted, chuckling. "Of course!"

Then he pattered away to a huge hogshead full of sprinkled clothes.

Tessie liked his black coat and trousers, cut up and down as straight as six o'clock. The coat had frogs on it just as if it were part of a suit of pajamas, but even quainter than that were the thick, seamed soles of his slippers. These reminded her of the dried codfish which hung about like paintings on exhibition on the walls of the Italian grocery stores under the "L" train.

Tingaling came back with an

"I KNOW why your name is Tingaling," she laughed.

Tingaling fumbled with Tessie's hand when she gave it to him. "Have a good time," he said.

armful of damp things, tested his iron with a wet finger that sizzled briefly, and fell to work again.

"Say, where d'ja learn to speak English?" Tessie demanded, swinging her legs carelessly.

"School!" he replied briefly. "At your City College!"

"That's more'n I ever went to!" she volunteered. "I was lucky to finish grammar. The rest I learned off the streets. Gee! So you're a rah rah boy, are you?" And he took on an added respect in her eyes.

But later in the day when she listened at the crack in the door, she was surprised to hear him speak a broken, mumbled English. She discovered that with some customers he not only made believe that he did not speak the language well, but he appeared also not to understand what was being said. When she questioned him about it he shrugged his shoulder and explained that the reason he did it was because it simplified matters.

That evening they sat down to a meal which Tessie had taken great pains to prepare and serve. "Very pretty!" remarked Tingaling, looking admiringly over at the table. Tessie beamed.

"It 'ud look nicer if I had a white table-cloth!" she remarked.

"Uh! Uh!" he said, and pattered out into the shop. She followed him, watching in the doorway while he climbed up a ladder to the topmost shelf. There were yellow bundles there, growing more yellow with time. "Uncalled for laundry!" he told her smilingly, and dropped one, two, three dusty bundles to the floor. In this way Tessie not only got two nice white table-cloths, but napkins and towels beside.

She laughed happily. She had never kept house in all her life. She had never played like other little girls. And now here was Tingaling who not only let her play house but played with her as well.

Once when they were resting after their evening meal Tingaling dropped a gift into her lap. It was a fan, a pretty little fan with a silver ring at one end. "My mother's fan!" he told her and folded his hands away in his jacket.

"Oh!" she cried. "What a cute thing! What a cute thing!' and she fanned herself daintily. She closed it. She opened it. Finally she discovered the silver ring at the end. This she drew over her finger.

"Look!" she exclaimed. "It's just like a wedding ring. Now I'm Tessie Tingaling! Tessie Tingaling!"

Tingaling bent over to admire the ring. "Could you take it off the fan, could you?" she wanted to know. "I love rings. I used to buy lots of rings in the ten cent store with red stones in them. Don't you like rings?"

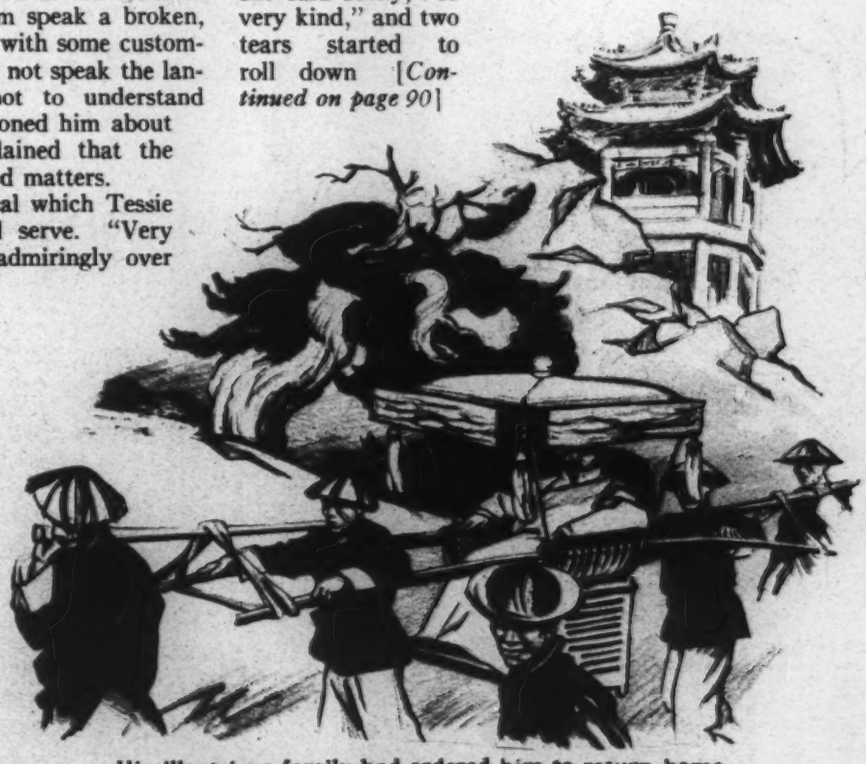
"I like them on you!" answered Tingaling.

She gave him her hand. "Give it a little kiss!" she invited. "Right on the finger with the ring!"

Tingaling bowed his head graciously and kissed the finger gravely.

"'Cause you've been so kind to me," she said softly, "so very kind," and two tears started to roll down [*Continued on page 90*]

Drawing by C. Le Roy Baldridge



His illustrious family had ordered him to return home.

DEAR

By

LILITH BENDA

HER mother was a haunting memory—her mother and that "Oh - My - Dolores" thing from "Floradora."

EVAN BRADNER was enjoying his walk home from the golf links. It was soul-satisfying, at forty-five, with something of a reputation as a gentleman, golfer, and master of corporation law, to find life lavish with its good things—to be hurrying home through the dusk to a high-hearted minx of a daughter and a wife so exactly everything that a wife should be.

All at once he noticed a pale young moon adrift in the April sky, and in a vague way his sense of well-being was disturbed. Uneasily he fumbled for the cause of it, then stepped briskly on. Nannie was away. He had forgotten. As he neared his house he saw that Nannie's windows were unlighted. Why must a wife so vital to one's scheme of existence run off for senseless week-ends with senseless invalid aunts? Just then, though, the night breeze puffed a heady scent from the hyacinth bed into his face. And he stopped short, aware to a certainty now of what was troubling him. It wasn't Nannie's absence—really. It was that French girl again.

Over and done with nearly twenty years—the sort of thing one regrets and forgets. It had troubled him but rarely, too, until that summer Sunday many years afterward in southern France when Nannie and he had visited an old, crumbling cathedral. There had been children's voices in the choir, sunlight filtering through the cracks of stained glass windows, then a little flood of delicate perfume from the flowers outside, and with it a tug at his breast, a sharp regret and vivid recollection of the French girl's little heart-shaped face. Ever since, it had been like that . . . A young moon. A scent from the flower-beds—and somehow she returned to trouble him.

He walked on, justifying himself, reviewing the episode haphazardly . . . Saratoga Springs during the racing season twenty years ago . . . Nannie at the seashore with little Anne, unable to accompany him . . . A capitalist's signature to be obtained . . . The capitalist most hospitable . . . Entertainments wherein lovely ladies disported themselves merrily, and adrift among them the French girl whose hair was the color of cloudy amber, and grew down into a point at the center of her forehead, giving her face with its pointed chin and rounded cheeks the shape of a heart.

As he trudged on he whistled softly the strains of that old forgotten "Oh-My-Dolores" thing from "Floradora." She had sung it twenty years ago in a sweet, wobbly soprano always a shade off the key . . . That and "Every Morn I Bring Thee Violets," and Lillian Russell's "My Evening Star."

Vaguely pretty she had been—frail, thin, with a certain puzzling incompleteness about her. When she spoke it was in little broken phrases. But when he kissed her she had a way of uttering a crooning sound that completed somehow all that was incomplete, and gave her a pathos and loveliness which he could never quite forget.

His musings had brought him to the foot of the porch steps, where he stopped short again. Somewhere close at hand some one was sobbing. Sobbing her heart out in an abandon of grief. He knew at once that it was Anne. Something terrible had happened to Anne. And he raced up the steps to discover his daughter crumpled into a shaking heap against the porch railing.

She appeared not to recognize him when he caught her close and held her without a word, minute after minute, feeling only that this wild-eyed, weeping girl, slumped so gracelessly in his arms, needed him badly now.

It was painful to see the creamy pallor of her face all blotched and swollen. For even as a child Anne had cried proudly, with lips held tight and chin high. He wished mightily that Nannie were home—bent his head at length to catch the girl's disjointed whisper:

"It's Keith. He's had a brainstorm."

The sobs had diminished. She lifted her head from his shoulder.

"He's gone quite crazy." Her lips twisted themselves into a smile which he found horribly out of place on Anne's soft mouth. "He wants to be released from his engagement. D-don't look so astonished, Daddy. I'm afraid he very definitely wants to give your one and only daughter—the air."

Her chin was high now, and her words ran smoothly. "He met a dancer at a supper club—at the Cupidon, Daddy. Three days ago he took that maiden aunt of his from Boston there. Ev-everybody knows that she's that dreadful Dion Porterman's woman. I mean the dancer, not the maiden aunt. You've met Dion Porterman. And oh, Daddy! My boy—my sane, splendid boy's going around in a daze, mumbling something about its striking like lightning, and she's like moonbeams and star-dust, and of course he must marry her, so will I release him, please?"

DADDY

Two Girls Looked to Him for Protection, and Aiding Either Would Have Hurt Both

"You're well rid of him, Anne. A jackass, and a cad!"

He felt her stiffen in his arms.

"No cad, and my own particular jackass! You don't think for an instant, do you, that I'd turn him over without a fight to that manhandled thing? Dion Porterman's thing?"

All challenge and rebellion, she turned away from him. Again he wished for Nannie.

But, "Isn't it lucky Mum's away?" Anne continued. "She wouldn't understand. You can, Daddy, if only you'll forget you're a parent with the honor of the house of Bradner at stake. Because I'm going to fight——"

"You can't enter into rivalry——"

"Can't I, just?" And there was that in the hardening of her voice and eyes which made him glad now that Nannie was away. She outstretched her bare, white arms. "If it's just a matter of flesh, you know, why, mine can cling too, and it's smooth as satin, and it isn't shopworn. And, oh, Daddy, can't you see? Even if she wins out, why, I'll wait and take what's left of him when she gets through! That's the way I feel about him, can't you see?"

Meeting his eyes, her face softened.

"I'm upsetting you, dear." She drew him gently to the door. "But I've simply got to consider the children, you see. Our children—Keith's and mine. Three of 'em, Daddy, two boys and a girl. Nice kids, and they want awfully to be born. So I don't see why I shouldn't try to humor them. Now hurry and dress, because he's coming to dinner."

"Who?"

"Keith."

"Keith?"

"Steady, Daddy."

"Do you mean that the fellow dares casually to dine——"

She stood on tiptoe to kiss his forehead.

"I asked him to let things ride for a day or two. It's a brainstorm—it will pass. We're going to the theater tomorrow night, and to the Cupidon later . . . Daddy, don't scowl so! I want him to see the two of us together. I want a showdown! And I want awfully to get a good look at this lady."

She looked up at him entreatingly, but a shade warily as well—a young thing, he realized, badly hurt, and in no temper to brook parental counsels.

So he kissed her, turned away without another word, but mounting the stairs paused before a mirror, taken aback by the grayness of his face. A shrewd, kindly patrician face . . . Evan Bradner, not far from fifty, rich in the good things of life—and how inadequate in an exigency, how helpless before the spectacle of Anne's distress!

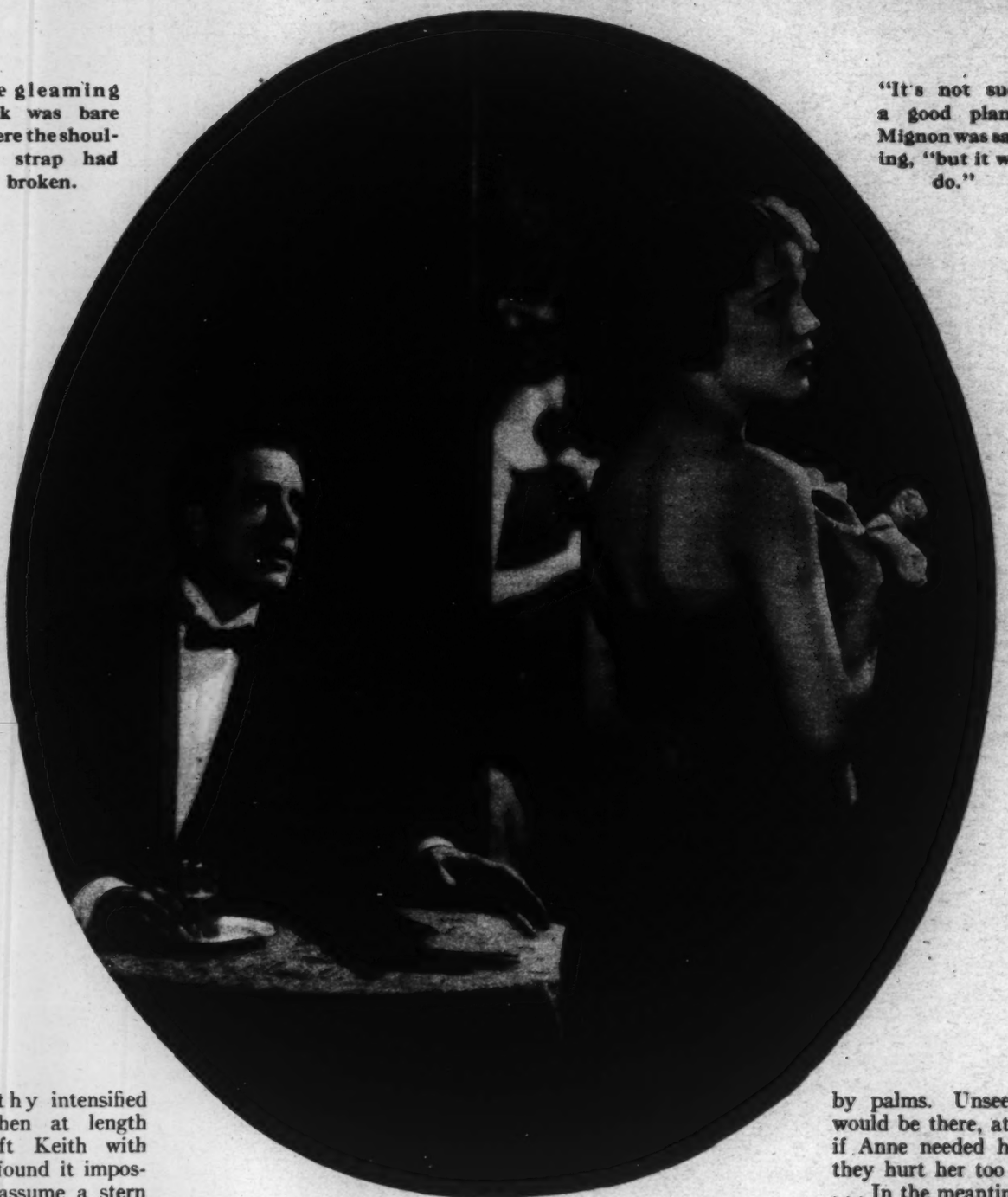
Through the open window came the cheep of a sleepy bird, poignant, wistful. At once he thought of the French girl who had slipped so quietly into his life, and so quickly and quietly out of it again. And it was not strange that he should feel a dawning compassion for the boy whom Anne loved so much. There were nuances to this affair. It was deeper, subtler stuff than the mere defection of a love-soaked cad.

Later, through a dismal dinner-hour, this feeling of

Evan Bradner tried to stave off his black dread.

The gleaming back was bare where the shoulder strap had broken.

"It's not such a good plan," Mignon was saying, "but it will do."



sympathy intensified until, when at length Anne left Keith with him, he found it impossible to assume a stern or accusing attitude. For Keith Greer tonight, despite his haggard, unhappy eyes, remained so unquestionably the Keith Greer whom he had chosen for Anne, a prepossessing lad, true to the code of good sportsmanship, and clearer of eye than his fellows, mellower of heart, finer of fiber.

"Passion—it's not a passion, sir." He was speaking in a sort of dreamy mumble. "Or at least passion only—only in so far . . . well, consuming, you know. Engulfing. Of the spirit, but like a stampede . . . It strikes like lightning. Of course, I'm quite aware that I'm making an ass of myself—talking like this, sir. I suppose it will be difficult to make you understand."

And this was the Keith Greer who talked polo ordinarily, and golf, and bonds, and dogs, but never women!

Evan Bradner, sunk deep in his armchair, felt old and ineffectual. There seemed nothing to do save stand by his girl to the sickening finale which loomed inevitable now. Cruel, though, what was ahead for her at the Cupidon tomorrow night . . . He straightened in his chair as an idea flashed upon him. The Cupidon! He had dined there once or twice with Nannie. There was a narrow balcony where the tables were set in booths embanked heavily by palms. Unseen, he would be there, at hand if Anne needed him, if they hurt her too much . . . In the meantime the boy stood waiting for him to say something. He cleared his throat.

"Keith," Evan Bradner rose from his chair, "what I'm about to say is very distasteful. Quite apart from any phase of this which involves Anne, do you happen to know that Dion Porterman——"

"Yes, that's regrettable. There's the state of purity—which can be trivial. But the *quality* of purity, like crystal . . . She has that." Then with no hint of transition from the dreamy, drawling monotone, his voice rose almost to a shout. *"I've got to get those rings off her hands!"* Then again in the low drawl, "And I really can't permit you to speak of these things, sir."

Beyond a question, it was senseless to prolong this. Anne's father nodded a curt dismissal.

For a half-hour then he sat motionless, reflecting. Perhaps there was something he could do. See this woman, talk with her. Perhaps she would help. Bradner knew that women of that sort were at times good sportsmen. He would send her a note in the morning, and telephone the Cupidon for a reservation. He would get a table in a booth on that narrow balcony that ran along the four sides of the great room, overlooking the dance floor. He

remembered a flight of white marble stairs. He would order his table opposite this staircase. For it was down these stairs, he recalled, that the feature dancers came when they made their entrance.

THEY had followed his directions scrupulously. The young lady would see him, he was told, within a half-hour. He edged his way into the booth where a gap amid the massed shrubs gave directly upon the staircase opposite. Black velvet draperies were back drops for the marble stairs, at the head of which crouched a bronze Cupid. The statue, a life-size, lean, adolescent boy, engaged his eye, it was so much at variance with the popular conception of a plump love-cherub. For the great wings of this Cupid hung limply, one of them grazing the floor. He was fitting an arrow to his bow with an air of bored and lazy detachment. Yet there was a hint of repressed alertness, as if here were a capricious godling on mischief bent.

The lights began gradually to dim. A hushed expectance stirred the atmosphere. A trumpet blared. And at the head of the marble staircase a spotlight was gleaming, its circled outline broken by the crouching Cupid in sharp golden silhouette.

And all at once the girl was standing there, at the head of the marble stairs. More an impression she seemed than a living creature, an impression of tininess, and luster, and vivid, palpitant color.

A tight-fitting bodice emphasized her littleness. Vast, billowy skirts of rainbow-tinted silks and metal laces appeared to waft her down the stairs, and into the arms of her dancing partner.

Leaning over the balcony railing, Evan Bradner was dimly aware that her skin gleamed with mother-of-pearl radiancy, that she danced with rare artistry, and wore an inordinate amount of jewels.

A moment later he was striving crazily to focus his attention upon such unimportant details as her dress—striving to stave off with the full strength of his will the black dread which was surging through him.

Her hair was the color of brown amber! And it grew into a little point at the center of her forehead. A heart-shaped face, so precisely like the French girl's face . . . If only Nannie were here, or Anne—some one to steady him! Feature for feature she was the same, but on a littler scale, and raised to a dazzling, miniature perfection.

She looked about nineteen—surely, no older. Numerals, dates flashed like little dancing figures before him. Nineteen six—April, August—August was the Saratoga racing season. With a chill sweat upon him, Evan Bradner fought off the horrible dread.

Surely, such things didn't happen, simply *couldn't* happen, except in morbid foreign novels. It was quite too outlandish, too brutal and far-fetched. As the girl wheeled deftly, he caught the gleam of great jewels. "Dion Porterman's thing," Anne had said of this radiant-eyed child who couldn't be much more than nineteen!

The music stopped. Directly below him she stood, smiling, acknowledging the applause. Perhaps because he was leaning so intently over the railing, perhaps because in the dimness surrounding the spotlight his white face stood out sharply, or more likely because of his note to her she looked up at him.

For the shred of a second the smile seemed to die on her lips as she looked at him. And for the veriest shred of a second, before she turned away for her encore, she swayed a little toward him. In greeting, in salute, she outstretched her tiny hands.

He drew back into the booth struggling for enough energy to wipe the cold perspiration from his face. Within a minute or two she would be here, here in the booth with him, across the table from him. His daughter. His other daughter!

He must strive to regain possession of his shrewd lawyer's brain, must act with despatch and sureness and justice, but without this unnerving emotionalism which swept every issue into the background before the pathos of her outstretched hands. Hands so incredibly small, so incredibly helpless, agleam with Dion Porterman's jewels.

A rustle of silks, and suddenly she was standing there, head up, eyes wary, hands tightly clasped.

Everything misted before him then. Everything became unreal, with his own voice sounding from some remote distance, and hers uttering precise, formal little phrases . . . "Talk this over . . . Straighten things out for these children, we two . . ."

Pretty, formal phrases . . . But through the mist he saw how fragile and intrepid she looked, saw the little gulping movements at her throat, and the recognition of him flaming softly from her eyes—saw, too, how fiercely the little thing was fighting down any sign of this recognition.

He heard himself asking senseless questions. Heard her replies. Her name was Mignon, it seemed. Mignon. That meant "little" or "tiny," didn't it? She must have been a wisp of a baby to have her mother select that name.

Desperately he groped for the words that would dispose of this matter justly, kindly.

"M-my dear," he stammered, and took her hands. "Tell me—tell me."

One moment she was panicky, and the next she was trying to pucker her brow and look utterly puzzled, as if she could not possibly know what he meant. Until finally there came from her a little sharp gasp of vanquishment, and then a thread-like whisper, no longer remote, telling him something vague about a photograph her mother had, and a father at sea, and a certain Sunday, "do you recollect it? It was in an old cathedral, and the children of the choir were singing, and we were standing—my mother and I—at the back of the cathedral. And I saw my mother, staring at you as if you were a ghost. How long she stared! Until something seemed to seize her with fright, and she hurried me away. We never spoke of it after, but of course I knew then that my father hadn't been lost at sea. I was old enough to know. Because I had seen the photograph often. And I still have it." Her great eyes seemed to delve back into the years. "You are

Drawing by Eldon Kelley

She halted for half a second, her hand on the Cupid's head.

stouter and gray, but you haven't changed much. And I'm sorry this has come about. She wouldn't have wished it, I'm sure. It's unpleasant for you—I mean about Anne and Keith and me. Things happen strangely."

"Where is she?" It was as if something wrenched the question from him.

"Dead these four years. She died quite pleasantly, of a broken heart."

Tenderness surged in a warm flush over her face.

"It took fifteen years. And she didn't blame you. She never blamed any one for anything, not even herself. But everything bored her so dreadfully. Even I bored her. And as for her gentlemen, they bored her a great deal. So when she got ill—no resistance . . . It took fifteen years. And it usually takes longer, I believe, to die of a broken heart."

All this in a child's voice that sounded like the tinkling of tiny bells.

"Go on, child," he urged gently. "Tell me about her, and about you."

"Well, let me see . . . When I was very little she used to sing me to sleep. And her lullabies were all love songs. She sang "Every Morn I Bring Thee Violets" and "My Evening Star." Used to sing them to you, didn't she, dear? Well, let me see now . . . We had a nice little place on the Mediterranean shore——"

She turned the full gaze of her big eyes upon him and went on in smooth little phrases. "My mother came there between seasons. She found me a real American governess, with a real American accent. Well, where we lived, it was a kind of a colony made up for the most part of ladies of good birth who'd been mixed up in scandals—*démodés, déclassées*. You find settlements like that along the Riviera. My mother chose it because she wanted me brought up among the right sort of people. She was so pleased whenever one of these ladies began to take her up. But even they always ended by cutting her. You can't blame them. Stories travel. Mother was well known along the Riviera . . .

"Well, I don't know what else to say. She died, and her friends arranged about the passports for me. I wanted so much to come to America. I had an idea it was a land of romance where there were Saratoga seasons and Palm Beach seasons and tally-ho parties, and the ladies still had Fritzi Scheff figures, and sang songs from Floradora to beautiful young men."

The light, even utterance had run on without so much as a catch of the breath. But when she finished he noticed that she shivered, and the flowers on her breast were fluttering. Keith Greer's flowers, perhaps, a spray of mignonette and tiny sweetheart rosebuds. The window across the corridor was open. He rose to close it when her laughter halted him.

"It's not the breeze," she caroled, touching the flowers, "makes 'em tremble. It's my heart. It's all wrong, you see. It's always been that way. There was the nicest doctor in Bellevue who called it an unruly ticker. He took care of me for ten weeks when I first got over here."

Bellevue. A charity ward in a city hospital. With this single glimpse into what must have been such a desolate struggle, Evan Bradner became aware of a warming process at work somewhere within him. Younger than Anne, littler, something that belonged to him—and she'd been a charity patient in Bellevue. Over her heart the rosebuds were nodding from side to side like little pendulums marking out the time.

A warming, softening process . . . He had felt it when they first showed him Anne on the day she was born. And there this other one sat facing him, fashioned so exquisitely, a fay quality about her, a luster and ecstasy—her heart-shaped face a symbol, with its eager, child's lips, and above them the troubled sort of eyes that trouble men. And the world had handled her roughly!

Her hands fluttered across the table. He took the two of them in one of his. Lying there, they quivered. He had picked up a wounded bird once which quivered like this in the hollow of his hand.

"Don't mind so much," she whispered. "It's all right. Don't mind so much, Mr. Bradner." Then more softly, "Father!"

She lingered over the word, caressing it. Suddenly, though, her voice was sharp and a little shrill:

"Does Anne call you Daddy?"

Without answering he followed the swift shift of her eyes through the gap in the shrubbery which gave upon the space at the head of the marble staircase, where he saw that Dion Porterman was passing now. He recollected having seen a play somewhere, in which the players crossed the stage one by one before the curtain rose. There was a sinister significance in this passing profile, heavy, sullen, waxen, like the sculptured profile of a decadent Roman.

And, "I think it's so funny," his daughter was saying. "Calling him Daddy, you know. Such a quaint custom you have over here. Calling them daddies . . . The ones who — who look out for you —isn't that how they term it? . . . Sugar Daddy. Always a little fatherly, they are, too. That's the funny

[*Continued on page 102*]

Keith had a brainstorm over the fascinating little dancer at the supper club

By
JAMES
KEVIN
McGUINNESS

Little Stories Collected
along the
Frontiers of Youth

Where the Jazz Begins

Drawings by Johan Bull

GIRLS measure their popularity in these times by counting the number of stags who cut in on them during a dance and comparing with a chum's tally. It has grown to be a game.

Illustrative of the custom's spread is a story from Wellesley. A junior returned to college after a visit home.

"Have a nice time?" her roommate inquired.

"Gorgeous. I got seven cut-ins during one dance from men I had never met before, and two of them had come as escorts of celebrated younger actresses."

The stag line scheme has another merit. It saves the trouble of devising conversation.

"By the time you've spilled your line," a young lady explained, "somebody cuts in and you can say the same thing all over again."

The stag line of private dances can't be blamed for embarrassment such as were experienced by a vacationing collegian who was introduced to a charming young lady at a supper club. He didn't catch her name, but this did not deter him from asking for a dance.

Between encores he took occasion to instruct his partner in one of the refinements of the Charleston. The young lady learned with amazing rapidity.

"She's not a bad dancer," the young collegian condescended when he was back at his own table. "Picks those tough steps right up."

"Picks 'em right up!" scoffed one of his companions. "You poor fish! That's Barbara Bennett, the actress. She used to be Maurice's dancing partner."

The vacationing collegian broke all sprint records to the cloak room.

It isn't correct to quote royalty directly, but a story has come back from Europe which is attributed to a certain Prince who can take his horses or leave them.

"Obviously, she isn't an American," he said, watching a young lady dance. "She can't do the Charleston."

It would seem, then, that the Charleston hasn't caught on widely in Europe yet.

The popularity of the Charleston is growing rather than declining, particularly since the steps have been standardized so that a lady may venture to suspect what her partner is going to try next.

The Charleston won social security during the more formal dances last winter. It was the rage of prom weeks at all the colleges. At every hotel and supper club you saw youngsters doing it throughout the spring. Now they have made it supreme at vacation resorts.

And not youngsters only. A leading New York dancing teacher says dignified professional men and portly bankers make up a good portion of his pupils.

A philosophical parent made a generous offer to his son, home from college, who was giving a birthday dance.

"If you youngsters must think it's the smart thing to drink, I'd rather you did it openly, not sneakingly, and that you had good stuff," said the father. "If you wish, I'll let you have something from my cellar to make a punch."

"Thanks, dad, but that pre-war liquor hasn't enough kick. My crowd prefers gin."

In Washington some of the younger set speak of good stuff as "legation liquor" and refer slightingly to poor quality in potables as "Congressional hootch."

This is because connoisseurship is still possible in the capital. Foreign embassies are permitted to import wines and liquors for their staffs, and since their houses are theoretically foreign soil they can serve what they wish without violating our laws. Diplomatic dances are very popular indeed.

Some authorities hold that the tango will regain popularity with the first heavy frosts; and that waltz numbers will be frequent on dance music programs next winter.

Dances go in cycles—so say the experts—and every particularly energetic one is succeeded by one gentle and languorous. So you might anticipate a bit now by practicing those panther-like tango steps in preparation for the Christmas parties.

There is an illuminating term current for the youth with seven-league boots who dances madly about a dance floor with his partner, leaving it to other couples to clear the way or risk the consequences.

"He's a bus driver," they say.

Worthy of a place in the English language is the retort of a damsel fair to the enamoured swain who invited her to go riding in his Ford.

"Not until it grows whiskers," was her reply; and it required several days for the

[*Continued on page 95*]

By MARY SINGER

If There MUST Be Romance

He Went Adventuring for Love, and Found It Where He Least Expected

"WHAT I could do with millions! Baths in milk and showers of perfume!"

OH, NO! They weren't urging him to marry. Not a bit!

His sister-in-law, Bessie, merely called up every other day and said:

"Now don't forget, Joe! We're expecting you tonight."

And when he got to the luxurious apartment which his brother, Hermann, had achieved on West End Avenue, Paula was there too—exquisitely gowned, beautifully coiffed, powdered, rouged, and lipsticked with deft subtlety. He took her in to dinner, was somehow paired off with her if the evening's program called for the theater, or found himself hanging over the piano while she played.

Bessie did the suggesting on these evenings—very adroitly, more by innuendo than by any direct words.

But in the intermediate days Hermann got at him both directly and frankly. Hermann was like that. Blunt. Out with whatever he thought. He would drop into Joe's little office on the balcony of the Fifth Avenue shop—they owned a chain of men's haberdashery shops jointly—and start off with an argument over the ordering of six dollar ties. Or broadcloth shirts. But strangely, when the argument was ended, neither of them was talking about ties or shirts. But about marriage. And Paula Harris. And Hermann would be saying something like this:

"What 're you waiting for, Joe? You're close to forty. Should've had a family by this time! Who're you going to leave all your money to? I don't need it. Neither do my children. God's sake! Why don't you marry? You could have Paula Harris. She'd make you a wonderful wife!"

"I know," he would answer.

"Then what's the matter with you? Why don't you get a move on you?"

"I don't know, Hermann." He would wrinkle his brow in the effort to explain himself. "She's a wonderful girl all right. I know that. And I suppose I'll be kicking myself if I don't marry her. But just the same—it's such a cold-blooded proposition between us. I don't know. I've always thought when two people marry there ought to be—there ought to be—well—a little affection between them; a little romance or——"

"Romance?" The very tone of Hermann's voice proclaimed Joe out of his mind. "Romance? What d'y'think you are now? Twenty? God's sake! You're a middle-aged man, Joe! If you wanted to go in for romance and that sort of thing you should've started when——"

Joe Leyn would sit up very stiffly in his chair. He would draw back within himself, sorry he had said anything at all.

"I might've known you wouldn't understand, Hermann. You can't see anything that doesn't have to do with dollars and cents. You're one of those people——"

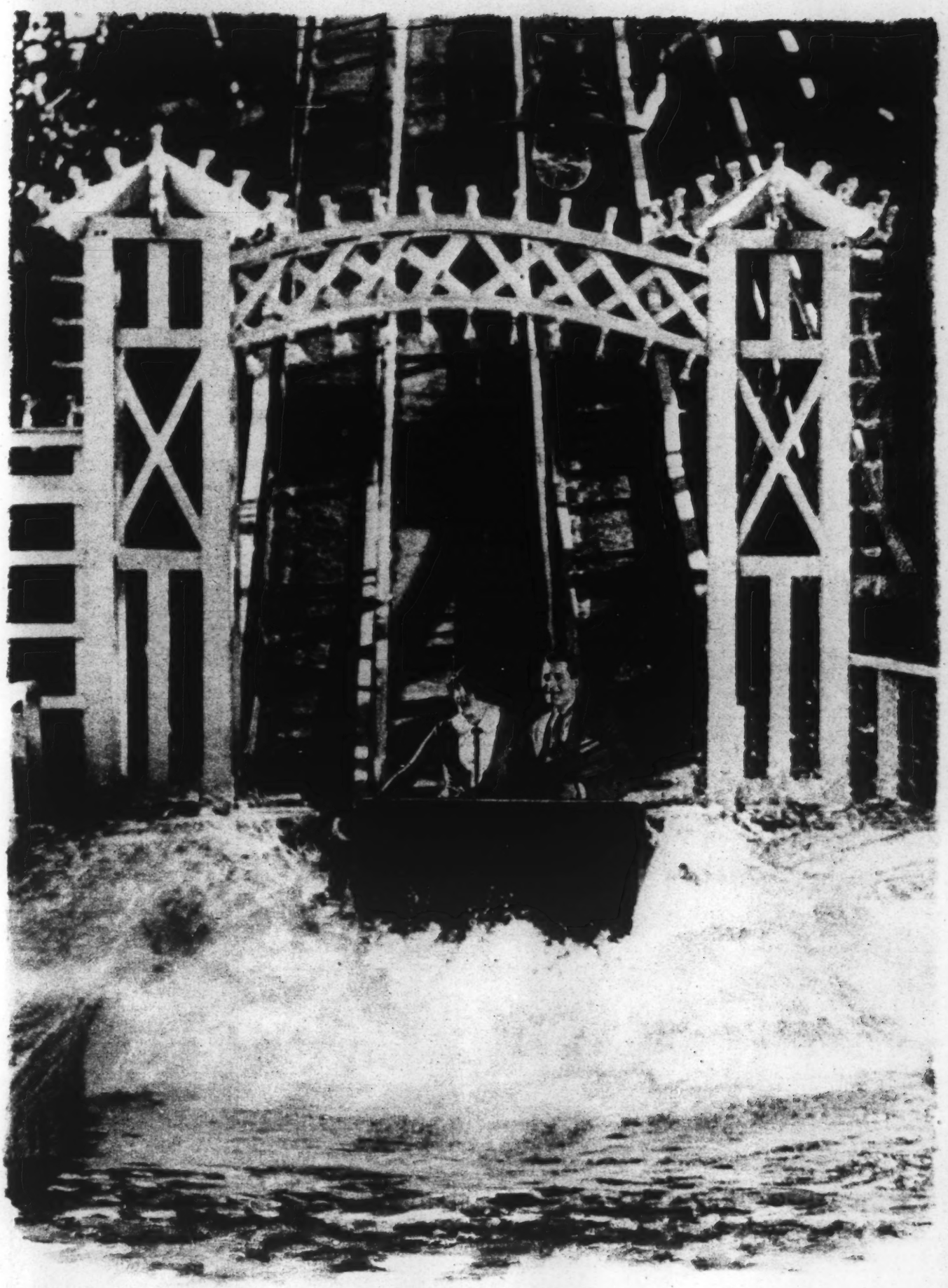
"Now, now, Joe! Don't go up in the air! I understand all right. I'm not such a hard-head as you think I am. I know there's such a thing as love, and—and romance—and all that. But not for you. When a man's as old as you are he can't begin looking for romance. You've got to marry a girl with sense, a girl who comes from a good family, who— Say! It doesn't have to be Paula Harris, you know. I'm not urging you to take her. Look for some one else. Far as I'm concerned——"

Oh no! Hermann wasn't urging him! Not a bit! He just talked and Bessie manouevered. And between them they managed to throw Paula at his head and him at Paula's.

It had gone on like that for close to a year now A dozen times during that year he had told himself he was going to put an end to the thing, break away from the situation that was closing about him. Twice he had made the attempt. Yet each time he had gone back, driven by his loneliness. A man couldn't sit in his apartment every night, like a cat, even if that apartment was on Park Avenue and boasted furnishings garnered from the art palaces of the world. Nor could he go out alone.

He had tried that, attired in the sartorial perfection of evening clothes. He knew he looked dashing, dark, impressive, and he ventured forth boldly enough to forage for himself, to take whatever the winds of chance blew his way. Things were always happening in a big city. Around every corner lay adventure, accident, chance. He might pick up a shabbily dressed girl somewhere in the white light section and discover in her the woman of his dreams. Such things had been known to happen. He pictured himself entering the smartest night club in town and finding there, in some blatantly gowned chorus girl, the wife for whom his soul hungered.

Many such wild, alluring dreams raced through his



THE girl beside him shrieked with terror and joy. She clutched at him and he put an arm about her. When they came down the second time Joe was holding her books.

head, but when he came to choose the setting for his adventure, his zest deserted him.

He went instead into the half-filled, stately dining room of a select but quiet hotel where the waiter knew him by name and no chorus girl ever entered. Later he saw a play, sitting in melancholy state in a box. When he came out into Broadway afterward, he saw a girl dawdling before a window filled with undergarments in various hues. She was pretty, and she cast upon him a glance coy and inviting. Whereupon he fled from her as if she had cholera, and was home in his apartment before the chimes of his Normandy clock struck midnight.

He spent the next evening with Bessie and Hermann. And Paula.

And the day following Hermann dropped into the office on the balcony and took him sharply to task.

"Now look at the thing sensibly, Joe. Here's a girl, well-educated, good-looking—not beautiful, I'll admit, but good-looking—and rich. Old man Harris is president of the Homestead and director in three other banks—and she's his only child. I'll admit Paula isn't so young. She's thirty. But then you're not so young either. You can't expect to marry an eighteen-year-old flapper. Get the thing over with, Joe! Make up your mind! It's a good match anyway you look at it. You'll be happy. I'm happy with Bessie. And you know how we got married. Take the step, Joe!"

Joe Leyn said nothing. He fought the idea another few weeks. And then very suddenly one night, as he was escorting Paula home from a theater party arranged by Bessie, he acted upon his brother's urgings.

They were sitting in a taxi, Paula erect and smiling beside him, holding close the shimmering folds of an exquisite evening wrap.

He turned toward her, his voice constrained.

"Listen, Paula," he said bluntly, "will you marry me?"

Of course he knew that all along she had been waiting for this moment. Yet after his question died away, so that only the echo of the words rang strangely in his ears, she sat unanswering beside him. He looked inquiringly at her. The smile that had been on her lips only an instant before had vanished. Her face was rigid and set, her eyes averted.

He prodded her. "Well, Paula?"

She lifted her eyes then, directly to his. Her voice came expressionless but even.

"Yes, Joe. I'll marry you."

Something trembled between them. For the barest fraction of an instant each leaned toward the other. Then, abruptly, she stiffened. He saw that under the folds of her wrap her fingers were twining themselves one into the other.

"You—you always knew I—I would, didn't you?"

He thought he discerned a wistfulness in the question, a wistfulness and a bitterness. A queer scowl came to his eyes. It dawned upon him that this thing was harder for her than for him. If he had whipped himself into this step, she must have goaded herself, too. She must have expected much more from life than he. She had been born to the things he had acquired only after years of ceaseless work. As Ruppert Harris' only daughter, with wealth, education, breeding behind her, she could well expect a goodly portion from life. And she was getting—him, Joe Leyn, a self-made millionaire who could boast none of the advantages of culture or family.

In a sudden spurt of sympathy he found one of her hands and took it between his own, patting it encouragingly.

"Meet me for lunch tomorrow?"

"If you want me to." Her assent was neither cold nor warm. Merely resigned.

He handed her out in front of the Harris mansion on the Drive and went home in a curiously perplexed state of mind. It was done. After all these years he was going to get married. After all these years of working, slaving, dreaming, planning—it was settled; and he ought to be at peace with himself. It *was* a good match. He knew that as well as Hermann did. Paula would do him proud, every way. And yet——

"I don't know," he sighed. "I don't know." He was suddenly weary of life.

After lunch the next day he drove with Paula to an exclusive jeweler's. There he purchased two articles. One was a string of perfectly matched oriental pearls whose cost made even Paula gasp. The other was a solitaire which flashed white fire. The pearls he clasped about her neck right in the store. The ring he dropped into his coat pocket.

Again in his car, however, with his chauffeur driving them toward the bank where Paula was stopping to see her father, he took the ring out and slipped it upon her finger. He was glad that with all the traffic about them he could not kiss her. But he was surprised when, as they alighted in front of the bank, she turned to him with an unexpected request.

"Joe?"

"Yes?"

"I—would you mind—if I asked you—not to tell Bessie or—or Hermann?"

"Not to tell? Don't you want me to——"

She shook her head.

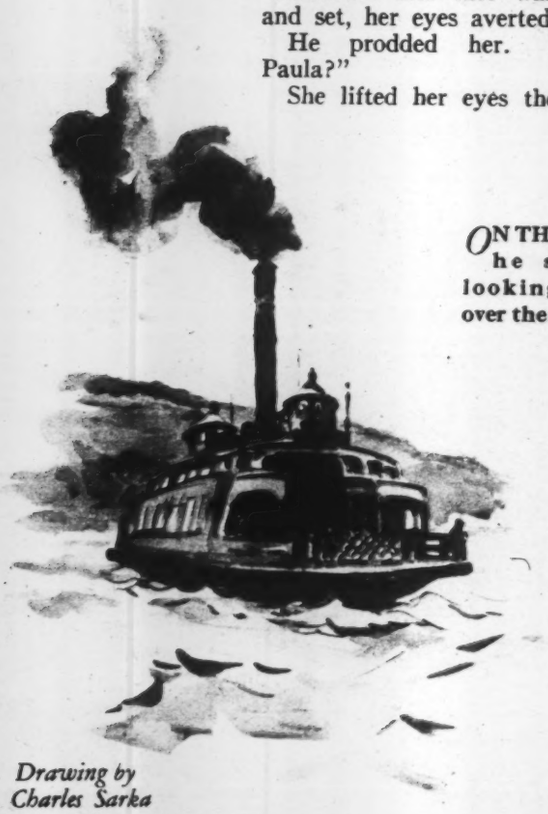
"No. Not just yet. It isn't that there's any particular reason why I—why I— But if you don't mind, I'd rather you let it rest—between you and me—for a little while."

"Whatever you say, Paula. But aren't you even going to tell your father?"

"Oh! I'll tell Dad all right," she smiled, starting up the steps of the bank.

Back at his office on the balcony Joe Leyn found a score of people waiting to see him. But he made straight for his own room and told his secretary he wanted to be alone for a time. He sat down at his desk, lit a cigaret, and stared moodily out of the window. Funny, he thought, how a man could work himself up through the years, attain wealth, achieve position and prestige, only to realize that the greatest measure of his happiness lay in how he married.

He smoked one cigaret after the other. The brilliant



ON THE ferry he stood looking out over the water.

Drawing by Charles Sarka

She pulled herself erect and said: "I want to see Joe alone, Bessie."

sunshine outside his window paled and dwindled into late afternoon dusk. He came to himself to find his ashtray overflowing with butts and the clock on the wall opposite him striking the hour of five. He sat up quickly and pressed the buzzer on his desk.

"Any one waiting to see me?" he asked his secretary.

"Only a Mr. Framm from a realty corporation. He said he had an appointment with you. The others couldn't wait any longer."

"Framm?" He knitted his brow. "Did he say what it was about?"

"Some amusement park over in Jersey, I think."

"Oh!" His brow cleared. "Oh yes! I'll see him."

Mr. Framm came in, a dapper, breezy, well-dressed young man with a confident smile enlivening his face.

"I was just wondering if you'd forgotten," he said. "We can still make it. I've got my car outside and we could do it inside an hour. It'll be light enough to go over the place, since it doesn't get dark before about eight these days."

Joe Leyn hesitated. He ought to see Paula tonight. She would expect him. Also old man Harris probably would have something to say to him. He looked speculatively at the clock. Sensing a desire to put the task off, the real estate man added hastily, "I can get you back to the city by half-past eight at the latest."

"All right," said Joe Leyn.

It was an attractive amusement ground to which Mr. Framm drove. It stood on a peninsula projecting well out into the Hudson on the Jersey side. It was furnished with a scenic railway, a loop-the-loop thriller, a shoot-the-chutes, several merry-go-rounds, an open-air pool equipped with diving boards from which men and women clad in the snugness of one-piece bathing suits executed fancy descents into the water below, a grandstand for a band, and a slope of silvery, sandy beach where children played with shovels and pails. There were shooting galleries, hot-dog stands, gypsy camps where fortune-telling was practiced at so much per sitting, a museum for freaks, a Wild West show, a Diving Venus spectacle, and a great super-attraction called "The Flood." The whole place was crowded with pleasure seekers who surged from booth to booth, their arms laden with a live burden of babies or a dead weight of bundles.

"You see," said Mr. Framm. "A week-day—and it's jammed like this. There isn't another place like it for miles around here. There's no limit to what you can do here. Even New Yorkers will [*Continued on page 99*]

The Story of a Girl who Had but One Day in which to Make Her Dream Come True

HOT SATURDAY

By HARVEY FERGUSSON

In the First Instalment:

RUTH BRUCK lived in a small Southwestern town, the victim—as she considered herself—of its drabness. At twenty she was already drifting helplessly toward the inevitable spinsterhood that had engulfed her older friend and counselor, Alma Budlong.

If only she could get away to one of the big cities—if only she could *make* things happen in this dull, gossipy sanitarium town! She had tried to guide her future in high school, but the results had embittered her.

Ruth's initial failure had been the loss of Walt Gibby, the most popular boy in her class, and her first beau. Nobody knew, of course, why Eva Niflot, another classmate, had been able to take him from her, but the town's subtle explanations were unpleasant—and untrue.

Next, bored and lonely, she amused herself with Conny Billop for a time. He was the town's young dilettante, and their friendship made the gossips gossip more. Then came John Romer, an older man recuperating at one of the nearby "sans." He was different—the unknown quantity. Older women were interested in him. Even her father protested when he learned that Romer took long drives with her in the family car.

Now Wilbur Fadden had arrived from the East, bringing a letter to Ruth's mother from an old friend. His family had a lot of money and he was the only child. New York — travel — beautiful clothes — interesting people ——all the things of which Ruth had dreamed were at his command. Yet he was a shy, inarticulate boy. But he was interested in her, she knew. At the picnic this afternoon, which she had planned so carefully, perhaps she could deepen his interest. He was her great chance, as she saw it, and she had to work fast.

One thing was certain. Wilbur must be kept from hearing the gossip of the town. Never would he understand about Walt Gibby, nor John Romer —while as for Conny Billop . . . Her mind flashed back to her last automobile drive with Conny.

He had parked the car, and she knew that he had primed himself for a great effort with a couple of drinks. When she held him off, his hands closed on her in a spasm of violence. For the first time she was a little afraid of him.

"You will!" he had said, as fiercely as he could.

"I won't!"

And then his ridiculous ultimation—"Either you will, or you'll get out and walk!"

CHAPTER VI

RUTH'S red-headed temper boiled up and flooded her body with a burning urge to violence. Conny, half-kneeling on the seat by this time, was bending over her. She rose up under him with a sudden astonishing strength, and gave him a mighty shove. Long and ungainly, he lurched and toppled over the door of the car, landing in the road and spoiling his beautiful ice-cream trousers. She slid into the driver's seat, threw on the switch and would have left him there had she not turned to face him as he rose. He looked so pitiful! His face was white and his lips trembling. She thought he would cry.

She slumped in a sudden revulsion of disgust and weariness.

"Get in," she said.

They spoke no word on the way home, and avoided each other on the street for weeks. But when they met they were polite, because each was now afraid of the other. He had not much to fear, but she had a great deal. If there was anything Conny wouldn't tell—in his own way—when he was sober, it was only a matter of waiting till he was drunk.

After the break with Conny, life was duller for a while than ever it had been before. Days seemed endless and empty, try as she would to fill them. She made the most of buying a new hat, going to every store in town before she decided. Time and again she wandered up- and down the few shelves of the public library, trying this book and that, finding them

Drawing by Van Werveke

"Little girl, I can't dictate to you—I love you."

As Conny landed in the road, spoiling his beautiful ice-cream trousers, Ruth slid into the driver's seat

only a wilderness of dull words. She went to each of the two movie theaters every week, and that furnished about two hours of mild diversion at best. Often it was merely a bore.

For this boredom and emptiness her mother had a remedy. In fact, she had two of them—crochet and embroidery. It was mother's simple conception of feminine destiny that a girl should sit on the front porch and do fancy work until the right man came along, and then marry him. Ruth not only had no taste for the needle, but also it provided her with no adequate outlet for her energies. The hardest thing for her to do was to sit still.

Far worse than her days were her nights. Time after time she dressed carefully and went down and sat on the front porch, thinking maybe somebody would drop in. But it was seldom anyone did. She sat looking bitterly at her empty hands, her pretty idle arms. There were nights when she hated the telephone for not ringing; nights when full moons shone on her loneliness and made it ache.

Mrs. Nooney gave a dance for the Nooney twins who were sixteen, but Ruth wasn't invited, although Clara Nooney, the elder sister, had been one of her classmates in high school. Of course it was a dance for the younger set and at twenty she was already out of that. Still, she knew that some of Clara's friends were invited to the dance. Eva Niflot had been there—Eva who held Walt

Gibby as her exclusive property now. And she knew, too, that Mrs. Nooney had more than once expressed disapproval of "that Bruck girl"—of the way she danced and painted her mouth. And Clara couldn't hide her embarrassment when first they met after the party. Probably Clara had wanted to ask her and Mrs. Nooney had refused. It was older women that made you feel your rep.

She thought of work as an escape from boredom, and brought the subject up in family council around the dinner table. She had no ambition and, what was worse, no special talent. But anything would be better than more years like this last one. And if she got a job and saved money she might go away and do better somewhere else.

THAT dream of departure was the real source of all her interest in working. It was a vague dream, because she knew nothing about work or the great cities toward which her imagination set, but her visions always contained one scene, with slight variations. She pictured herself sitting before a wide rosewood desk with a glass top in a sumptuously furnished office, far above the rumble of a city street. She was some kind of secretary and had a notebook before her. These details were not very clear, but on the other side of the desk sat a man. He was young, yet not so very young. There was a little gray in his heavy black hair. He was tall, broad-shouldered and lean, with slightly reckless eyes and a mouth and chin firm in decision. He rose and paced the floor, apparently in deep thought. He spoke a few important words which she dutifully noted down, then suddenly stepped to her side, laid his hand on her arm . . . "Little girl, little girl, I can't dictate to you! I love you . . ."

It was a long drop from that dream to a discussion of ways and means with mother and father. Neither of them wholly disapproved of her desire to be useful and busy, but when it came to considering what she could do the question rested.

She and Alma Budlong discussed work more than once. Alma thought if Ruth wanted to work the family ought to send her away to college and let her learn a profession.

"They would do it for a boy if it took their last penny. Why shouldn't they do it for you?" Alma demanded with impatience.

It was good logic, but Ruth knew the family would never see it and she did not even pass it on to them. But she was comforted and flattered by the serious interest Alma took in her problems. In fact, her friendship with Alma did more than anything else to make life endurable that summer.

She had always been somewhat in awe of the entire Budlong establishment. When Mrs. Budlong was alive and the Judge at the height of his political glory, the Budlongs were the social leaders of the town. She had never been inside their house in those days.

With Mrs. Budlong dead, the old Judge poor and senile, and Alma working, the glory of the Budlongs was only a memory, but the memory still gave them a certain prestige. When distinguished strangers came to town Alma always had them to tea, and when anyone of social importance gave a large entertainment Alma was sure to be invited. Almost anything Alma chose to do was all right. She was one of the first women in town to smoke openly. Not many others would have dared to start, but when Alma started several dared to follow. Among the women she had a place of undeniable leadership.

In the library, too, she had done things no one else would have attempted. She made the city council double the appropriation for books and she made the board of governors buy whatever books she told them to buy. It was a favorite amusement of hers to pick out some highbrow shocker, persuade a lot of women to read it, and then tell around what they said. Some were angry, but it soon would become an accepted fact that if you hadn't read the book you were behind the times, and if you admitted being shocked, as almost everyone was, you were positively antiquated. No one but Alma could have done that.

She had an easy way of taking up with people that interested her, no matter who, and making it seem the most natural thing to do. She stepped across social lines that were high walls to others. She had done that in a measure when she took up with Ruth. They had known each other as long as Ruth could remember, but their families had not moved in the same circles.

Their friendship had long ago reached that point of intimacy where Ruth told Alma all about everything—except some details that she felt Alma wouldn't understand—and Alma listened eagerly, almost greedily, and gave advice and comfort.

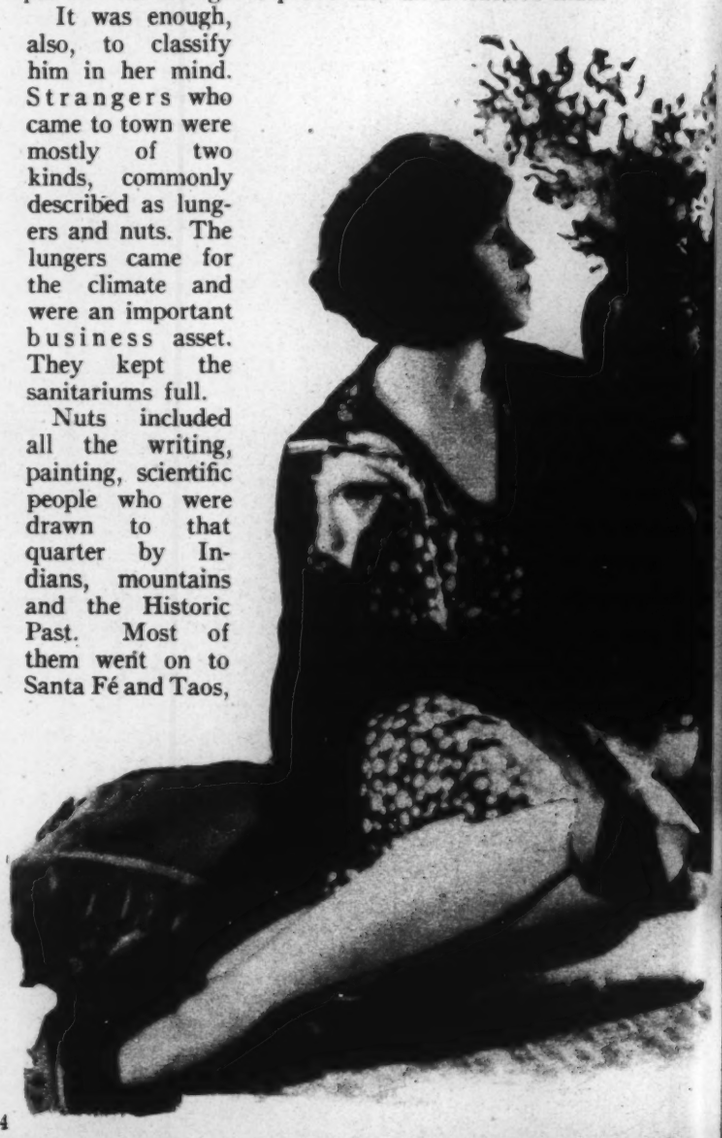
"You may as well face your problem for what it is," Alma told her. "You've got to marry and settle down or else get a job. And there isn't a man in the town anyone could want very desperately to marry, and there isn't a job that has any future for a woman. I thought it all over long ago and decided I'd much rather work and be independent, and I don't regret my choice. But just the same, it makes me tired to see men with about a spoonful of brains making four times as much money as I can ever hope to make."

NOT many men came to Alma's house, and most of those who did were married. But Ruth met strangers there, and strangers interested her more and more. It was at Alma's that she had met John Romer, although not exactly by Alma's express intention.

She had heard of the man for months, knew him by sight and felt an urgent curiosity about him. For one thing she knew that he interested other women. The amount of talk she heard about him at teas and bridge parties was enough to prove him an attractive man.

It was enough, also, to classify him in her mind. Strangers who came to town were mostly of two kinds, commonly described as lungers and nuts. The lungers came for the climate and were an important business asset. They kept the sanitariums full.

Nuts included all the writing, painting, scientific people who were drawn to that quarter by Indians, mountains and the Historic Past. Most of them went on to Santa Fé and Taos,



but the New Mexico art colonies were near enough so that Ruth had heard much of their wonders.

Romer was identified with both of these exotic classes. He had emerged upon the town from a "san," and although his only occupation seemed to be drawing a government pension, his conversation had a distinctly nutty flavor. Some said he was shell-shocked, and if he had accepted this familiar classification it would have been a great help to him socially. But he declined it—said he never even heard a gun go off.

For Ruth he had the charm of the mysterious and the forbidden. He was a new kind of man and one of whom the family would be sure to disapprove. There could be no doubt about that.

One afternoon she saw him walking home with Alma, and that reminded her she had something to tell Alma. So she drove over to the Budlongs and dropped in. At the door she hesitated when she saw them having tea. Alma didn't look at all glad to see her.

"I thought you were alone," she lied. "No, I can't stay but a minute." She just nodded and smiled at Romer, but he came forward and shook hands.

Alma was sitting on a cushion on the floor smoking a cigaret, which meant that she was putting on her most advanced front. She and Romer talked about plays and art and a lot of other things Ruth knew nothing about. She couldn't find a place to put in a word, but she didn't feel out of it because Romer kept looking at her, even when he was talking to Alma. Whenever their eyes met she smiled at him.

He and Alma pattered on, and Ruth sat there, knowing she ought to go, that Alma did not want her to stay.

THEY had a long argument as to whether people were becoming more broad-minded. Alma maintained that they were. People were not nearly so narrow about——well—everything.

Young girls had so much more freedom, for instance, than they used to have.

Romer agreed that there had been a great change since the war, but he thought the difference was in circumstances, not in people.

"Women have more freedom all right, but very few of them want it. I suppose some of the girls come to like their freedom, but most of them would trade it in a minute for a good income and a reliable husband."

This provoked Alma to indignant disagreement. She had the idea that women were consciously creating a new social order. They didn't need men any more as once they had.

To get himself out of a hot corner in the argument, Romer tried to drag Ruth into it.

"What do you think, Miss Bruck? Is your place in the home or out of it?"

Ruth thought in silence that the whole discussion was twaddle, and that Romer had a nice voice and nice eyes, and it was too bad he had so many crazy ideas and no job. She had no intention of making herself ridiculous by talking. She knew she was out of her conversational depth. She smiled at him, archly but sweetly.

"I've quit thinking for the summer," she said, rising and smoothing her skirt. He laughed and rose too. As he did so she felt a thrill of triumph, mingled with one of contrition. She knew that in effect she had lifted him out of his chair by the power of her smile, and she knew that Alma resented both her staying and her taking Romer away.

"Don't go yet," Alma asked, talking exclusively and pointedly to Romer. "It's early——"

"No, I must get along—have an appointment. It's been awfully nice."

So there they were outside together with her car before them, and the least she could do was to offer to set him down somewhere.

It was nearly dark when she finally did leave him near his rooms on Second Street, and she got home late for dinner.

She simply hadn't been able to resist the temptation to take him

"WHAT do you think, Miss Bruck? Is your place in the home or out of it?"

Under a great blue spruce they unloaded baskets, rugs and mackintoshes, heavily upholstering the earth.

for a little spin. She wanted to prove that he didn't really have an appointment.

Leaving him, she didn't ask him to call because she knew the family wouldn't stand for it, and he didn't suggest it either. He did ask her to come to see him some time, in a way that implied he knew she probably wouldn't. She gave him an arch look and thanked him just the same, but she wasn't in the habit of calling on men! So they parted without making a date.

That, she supposed, was the end of it, and she meant that it should be. He was awfully interesting and all that, but he was nothing to marry and being seen with him would just start one more story.

As she drove around town the next few days, every time she saw a man in a gray suit like his she looked a second time to be sure it wasn't Romer.

She was *not* looking for him. She wasn't even thinking about him. But she had not entirely forgotten him, either.

When she finally did see him he was sitting there on a park bench, smoking his pipe in mid-morning, like a bum out of a job. Her blood jumped, and she put on the brakes without any more thinking what she was doing than if a collision had threatened. He came forward smiling, and there they were again . . . It would certainly be better to talk to him in some less conspicuous place. So she invited him to ride.

It happened that way time after time—not every day, but several times a week. She was taking chances, she knew, but she was also having fun. She built no day-dreams upon him because he offered nothing she dared or cared to dream about. It wasn't love or adventure she wanted any more, but triumph.

What put an end to it all was the advent of the Fadden boy. He filled her mind with ideas that crowded Romer out. She went around blocks to avoid the corner where they used to meet, and she hoped to heaven no one had seen them together—at least no one Wilbur Fadden knew . . .

As her mind returned to Fadden and the glittering possibilities he represented for her Ruth swung her feet off the edge of the sofa with a sudden burst of energy and sat up. It must be nearly time to dress. But this hour spent in the cellar had served to clarify her mind. Despite the gossip of the town she knew there was nothing in her friendship with either Conny or Romer of which to be ashamed. She was no more indiscreet or thoughtless than other girls. But for some reason people talked about her more. The thing to do was to wipe the past out of her mind—write it off. Fear was the greatest enemy of success. Everybody knew that. And it was silly for her to be afraid.

She gathered her kimono together and started up the cellar steps. She felt elated. Her mind tingled with a conviction that before that hot Saturday merged into Sunday's dawn, she, Ruth Bruck, would change not only her own destiny, but that of several other people.

CHAPTER VII

UPSTAIRS again she glanced at her little dressing table clock. It was ten minutes to four; the picnickers were almost due. Only a few minutes now, and the hour for which she had planned so carefully would arrive.

She frowned over the problem of what to wear. She wanted to look sweet and dainty, but not too dainty to climb a mountain. Finally she decided on a simple one-piece dress of light jersey, matching stockings, and her second best pair of pumps.

She could hear them arriving and mother receiving them—could pick out Alma's high, excited voice, Doc Jaggers' husky one, and that of the boy with its unmistakable note of embarrassment. Young Fadden seemed to be perpetually embarrassed.

"Ruth!" It was her mother calling. "We're ready to start whenever you are, dear."

"I'll be down in a jiffy," she answered. "You people go ahead and get in the car."

After that she spent several minutes more before the mirror, studying herself earnestly with the help of a hand-glass. She used a hand-glass a great deal because she loved to look at her profile. It was regular and what people called pure. She always had her picture taken in profile, with her chin slightly lifted and her eyes rolled upward. The effect was one of singular sweetness and elevation—almost madonna-like, she knew—especially when she was dressed in white.

It was her profile that he would see mostly, driving out. She turned and smiled at herself, full face. The effect was almost that of meeting another person—an impish-looking person with lips that curved provocatively and eyes that narrowed to mischievous slits. It was not the expression she wanted today. Deliberately she sought to tame it, but it could not be done. When she tried to look innocent she merely looked ridiculous. She ended by making a face at herself and jumping up. They [*Continued on page 84*]

The GIRL called SIN

There was once a Bobbed-haired Bandit in a Mining Camp —and a Heart Was Stolen, Too

By HAZLETT KESSLER

AT MAYSVILLE, the mining camp, there was the Blue Moon. And at the Blue Moon there was the girl called Sin.

The illuminating suggestiveness of those words—mining camp. The logical raw ugliness of the place. So many veins of soft coal to be worked out. After that dissolution, with nature slowly closing the wound.

That was Maysville. The stark outlines of tipples with their broods of squat sheds. The straggling rows of frame houses. The bulky cluster of false-front stores. And the Blue Moon.

In the daytime with half its window blinds hanging low the Blue Moon had a subdued, apologetic look as if afraid the sunlight would catch it out. But when the camp was enfolded in the merciful arms of night the Blue Moon shone forth with a luring, lively brilliance.

It called. Smiling invitation in the merry glow of lights, in the snatches of song and piano notes swirling out to disappear in the darkness. In that other music: the *con amore* of the clinking of ice against glass; the measured *moderato* of the click of chips and the slither of cards; the *allegro* of the staccatto chatter of dice.

Bring your pay-day money, man!

All day the men worked in the subterranean honeycomb of the mine. Back in the mole runs they labored in dust and sweat, digging, loading, facing the constant menaces. Slate fall. Fire. Explosion. Black damp.

Never did a cage-load of miners take the sickening swift drop to shaft bottom with the certainty that all would see the sunlight again. Somber holidays they had, knocking off work the day after a man was killed. And for each million tons wrested from the harsh earth — three men died.

At evening when the black dust was scrubbed off and supper past the miners left their boarding-houses and bachelors' shacks. The Blue Moon beckoned, offering the golden dust of gaiety to make them forget the black dust of toil.

Those who provided the gaiety lived in a narrow little world of their own. The girl called Sin had never known any other.

At a supposedly tender age the strong arms of men had tossed her up to the top of the bar, and down its narrow length she had danced for the coins they flung.

Danced with tiny twinkling feet and slim legs reflected in the shimmering surface of polished wood. Danced with a mop of red hair tumbling in her eyes—her solemn gray-green eyes. Danced with a gamin spirit that laughed at her own lack of grace—a spirit that acknowledged kinship with the rough, inarticulate, awkward men who watched her antics.

Now she was twenty, and she danced nightly at the Blue Moon. Velvet Dick played the piano for her, his

DICK told her that she couldn't keep even Cinderella's slippers on unless she put some stuffing in the toes.

sensitive fingers hovering over the keyboard with the touch which had won him his nickname.

At night Dick played for her, but in the afternoon he played to her. Tender improvisations that stilled her restless feet, wiped the reckless gamin look from her face, calmed her wild eyes to wistful depths. Poignant melodies that wandered into shadows and got lost—then, suddenly surprising, teased her with a whimsical bubbling gaiety—notes tumbling out like chuckles of mirth.

Away from the piano Velvet Dick had an out-of-place look. The limp and collapsed look of a discarded garment. But against the background of his instrument he came alive. Life flowed into him with the touch of his fingers on the keys, his feet upon the pedals. In front of the upright his slender figure seemed to expand. His dark, dreaming eyes, caught in a far-away stare, held something of the look that must have lived in the eyes of court dwarf and jongleur.

Velvet Dick had been concerned about the girl's name.

"I wish they wouldn't call you Sin. 'Tisn't your name, is it?"

"Sure it is." The sea-colored eyes and the gamin smile were lightly mocking. "Don't you like it? I'm afraid you'll have to get used to it. It's all the name I've got."

"A nickname?"

"Uh huh."

Her glance was teasing him, taunting him even, to go on. To ask the question on the tip of his tongue. To ask her how she got her nickname. But Velvet Dick didn't ask her. If she didn't want to tell him he wouldn't be questioning her. Instead he said casually:

"Don't you care?"

She shrugged unconcernedly. "If you've got a name, you've got it. Might as well have one that's snappy."

WHO could help smiling at a man who cared for a Blue Moon dancing girl with a name like Sin? A girl reared in that narrow little world. A girl who belonged—utterly belonged!

A queer one, Velvet Dick. By the name of him and the look of him he belonged, too. Fitted in as neatly at the Blue Moon as the piano he played—the piano whose scarred surface showed the circles etched by moist liquor glasses, the spots charred by forgotten cigarets.

He belonged—and yet he was somehow different. Old Johnny, a bartender whom Sin had known years before, had been like that. He used to read to her poetry that she only half understood, while she gravely polished glasses. Velvet Dick reminded a person of Old Johnny.

HER gamin spirit appealed to the rough men.

There was the way Dick would disappear when the Blue Moon entertainers—the dancer, Sin, and the blonde singer, Inez Welton, and Velvet Dick—had their hour off at the middle of the evening. Rarely would Dick be seen lingering at the bar or sitting at a card table. During that free hour no one but Sin would have known where to locate him.

One evening he had urged her out of the welter of churning dust and smoke and scuff, into the summer night. And stirred by curiosity she had accompanied him. Not openly. It was a secret between them.

Between the bedrooms on the second floor there ran a hallway. At its outer end French windows opened upon a view of orchard and vineyard, stretching back of the resort. Close to the building was an ancient apple tree, with its lowest branch parallel to the rear wall and slanting upward in front and within reach of the hallway windows. At some time or other short boards had been nailed along this branch, making a rude ladder from the second floor.

SIN had used this available secluded exit to meet Velvet Dick in the dusk of the orchard. They had walked through the vineyard and across a hollow into a wooded ridge, a quarter of a mile back of the Blue Moon.

"Here," Dick had told her shyly, "is my room in the woods."

The spot which they had reached was like a tree-enclosed room with a tremendously high ceiling of dark sky. And tilting her head backward Dick had named the brightest stars to her, and talked to her about them.

How could a man like that be figured out? Was there man in him at all? Hardly, according to the swaggering standards of the Blue Moon. Things happened there to take the measure of a man.

The second pay-night after Velvet Dick's coming, some stranger clashed with the Broad-Gage Boy during a dance. Velvet Dick thrust Sin down behind the piano and crouched in front of her, out of range of stray shots. She twisted from his grasp in time to look out and see young Hisky, the manager, disarm the drunken Boy, while two other house-men grappled with his opponent.

After a moment Sin's glance turned back from the sight of Hisky's dominance to the negligible figure of Velvet Dick. "Come on. It's over. Play!"

Inez Welton came toward them with a sneer on her petulant lips. She and Velvet Dick were never more than coolly civil.

"Dearie," she drawled loudly at Sin, "it's a good thing we've got a man around. I'll say that Hisky can tamp anything that starts around this joint!"

Fluffing out her blonde hair with her fingers, Inez oozed smugness. Being able to praise Hisky and to cast a slur on Velvet Dick at the same time was something to purr over. The favors of Inez were for the strong.

Yet Inez' little brother, Ted, was like a scuttling rat. A scavenger with a soft effeminate face that men disliked instinctively. Only as a bona-fide bad man could Ted Welton have won respect—but for that, they said, he hadn't the guts.

Sin glanced at Velvet Dick, who had begun to play again. He must have heard the blonde singer dripping contempt. But he did not look up. Sin moved away, her eyes clouded.

What Inez had said about Hisky was true. There was man in him, all right. Any one could see that. A fighting fool. When something broke loose he was there. Like a flash. Count on Hisky! He suited the swaggering standards.

Sin knew that one day she would have to decide whether Hisky suited her. At times she felt his eyes upon her, speculating. As if trying to make up his mind whether or not he wanted her. A canny streak holding him cautious

Sin had been brought up in the gay world of the Blue Moon Café And she belonged—utterly.

before her gamin smile and her devil-may-care manner.

But Sin did nothing, one way or another.

Inez, however, knew what she wanted. Inez played with what skill she had to draw Hisky's interest to herself. Toward other men she was circumspectly indifferent, even toward those from whom presents could have been wheedled.

And then that happened which made Sin of the Blue Moon a topic of conversation. In Maysville. In Winfield, the county seat. In the mining camps and villages where the Winfield daily newspaper circulated. A front-page story for supper-table comment and judgment.

The robbery of Crip Turley's store.

Shortly after the crippled store-keeper, Turley, had

"THOUGHT you'd pull off some thing pretty on your own, eh!" demanded Hisky.

routed out of bed Deck Jones, the Maysville constable, this sole official of the mining camp appeared at the Blue Moon.

The sight of the familiar shambling figure of the constable caused no stir. It was just before midnight, and the resort was crowded. The tables in the smoky gaming-room and fringing the dance floor were filled. Above the buzz of talk the voice of Inez rose; the jerking energy of Velvet Dick at the piano. Sin was waiting in the background for Inez' song to end, and Hisky lounged in the doorway of the gaming-room, quiet but alert.

At the constable's nod, Hisky sauntered over. Then, after a moment's low talk, the two of them walked along to the other end of the bar where Sin was standing.

"H'LO, Deck," she smiled at him casually. "What's on your mind?"

"Want to see yuh, Sin."

"Me?"

"Yep. Private."

"Say, feller, what's the big idea? I'm going to dance in a minute."

"Forget the dance, Sin," cut in Hisky. "Come on."

"All right, boy friend, if you insist."

Between the two men she walked out of the main room into the hallway that led upstairs. "Well, what's all the shooting for?"

The constable tugged at his drooping gray mustache and looked at her solemnly. "You're under arrest," he tapped her arm, "fer stickin' up Crip Turley and robbin' his safe."

Sin stepped back. "You ain't looking for *me* for anything like that, Deck?"

"Nothing else except. Don't try to stall here, I gotta search yer room." He grasped her arm.

"All right—but don't rush me." She shook off his hand with a sudden jerk. "Be yourself, Deck. Where do you think you are—in the movies?"

Sin turned and started quickly up the stairway, with Deck Jones and Hisky following. Reaching her room she sat down and lighted a cigaret while the constable began his search.

"What time was it, Deck," asked Hisky, "that Crip was stuck up?"

"Between ten and eleven."

Hisky stared at Sin. That was the entertainers' off hour. She had not been downstairs during that time.

Sin did not meet Hisky's glance. "Careful, Deck," she drawled. "If you mess up my duds too much I'll sue you for damages, and I don't mean perhaps!"

The constable pulled a black cloth mask from a bureau drawer and laid it on the dresser beside a checkered cap.

"Nothing to that, Deck," said Hisky. "Sin had the mask to wear during a dance."

"Mebbe so, but Crip said she was wearin' a black mask, and that black and white cap." The constable pointed to it with his thumb. "Crip said he could see Sin's red hair stickin' out from under it. No one else around here got hair like hers, has they, Hisky?"

Hisky was silent. Sin's eyes were on him curiously.

"Well, Hisky? Are *you* thinking I did it?"

Hisky's speculative glance, summing her up. "It looks pretty much like you did, Sin."

Still she looked at him; then suddenly shrugged her shoulders and laughed.

"Deck," she said, "you've been taking a correspondence course in detecting, I bet. Got your diploma with you?"

"The only paper I got on me has your name on it, Sin. I reckon you'll get plenty of time to laugh that off!"

Little Joe Gates, owner of the Blue Moon, sent Hisky to the county seat early in the morning to arrange for Sin's bail.

Hisky found her sitting on the edge of the cot in her cell, chin cupped in her hands. Her sea-green eyes were brooding. So she had sat through the night, staring at the bars. The steel bars which threw a latticed shadow upon her.

Of all shadows, none are more sinister than the criss-cross shadow of steel bars.

Sin stared at Hisky without speaking—Hisky, whose eyes many times had speculated upon her because of her devil-may-care manner.

"Well—did you think you'd pull off something pretty?"

Out of her quietness her glance flashed up at him. "Aw, Hisky, you make me sick!"

"Tryin' to turn a trick on your own. You know nothing like that goes at our joint."

Strangely righteous was Hisky, according to his lights. Sin was amazed at his managerial importance.

"YOU know Joe don't stand for nothing out of the way. No crooked games, no rollin' a drunk—nothing atall. 'A square joint lives longer,' he says."

"Say, listen! What did you come to see me for, so early in the morning and missing your beauty sleep? Just to give me a sermon? What're you trying to do—high-hat me?"

She drew a sharp breath. Danger signals were flying high on her cheeks. The gamin spirit of her was roused and fighting.

"I got enough," she snapped, "trying to figure out what's been pulled off on me!"

"Say, nothing's been pulled off on you! Everybody knows Crip Turley and figure he'd tell nothing but the truth."

"That's just it!" Sin threw out her hands. "That's what I can't dope out—why he picked on me."

"You see, there's where you're stuck. He even saw your hair. And he didn't hear a car, so it couldn't have been some one from out of camp. Makes it look all open and shut."

"Hisky, you're as comforting as an empty bottle!"

"Why weren't you around the place, so you'd have an alibi? 'Course, as Joe says to me, an alibi from one of us wouldn't count so much with a jury. But the house was full. There'd been some to swear you was right there all the time, and couldn't have done it. Where were you, anyway?"

"No place. Out to get a breath of air. Out back—in the orchard."

"Alone?"

"Yeah—alone."

"You going to tell that to a jury?"

"Aw, you—you go to——"

"Say, don't you get hard-nosed with me, or I'll—— Living up to your name, eh? Pretty close about telling us where you got your name? Kept it dark? I'll say it fits you!"

She flared out at him. "So that's the kind of a friend you are, Hisky? I always kinda thought you might be. Well, I'm glad to know—why'd you come here anyway, seeing how you feel about me?"

"Joe sent me in to get you bail. O' course we'll do what we can for you."

"Shake a leg, then, and do your stuff. I've been parked here as long as I want to. I didn't choose this scenery and it's beginning to get on my nerves."

At the Blue Moon they let Sin alone. There was that in her manner which discouraged approach.

It was a new sort of Sin who came back to the Blue Moon after that night in jail. A reckless hardness was in her eyes, a defiance that met curious glances. She was marked with the swift acid marking of over-night notoriety.

"Bobbed-haired bandit!" It was a notoriety that drew patrons.

The nods. The whispers. The stares—furtive or bold, or even admiring. Through the sting of them Sin nightly moved and danced.

High-headed and hard-eyed. No longer given to effervescent banter. A different Sin, with a sullen, snappy and snarling humor.

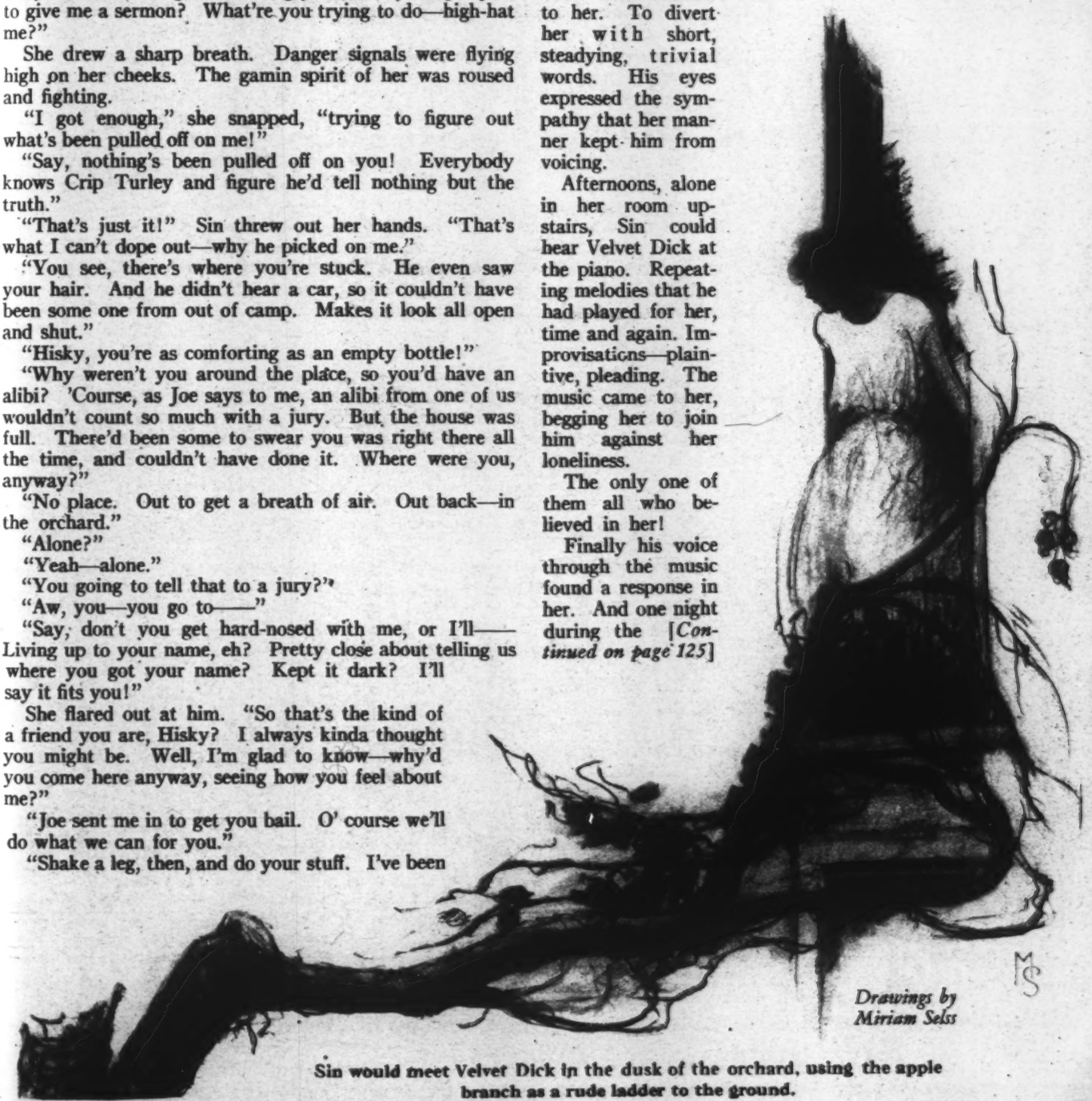
The way she looked now, her name fitted her.

Velvet Dick at the piano muttered futile curses at the sight of her defiant loneliness. He was driven, in hot helplessness, to the bar between each orgy of jazz. When Sin turned a conscious back upon the filled tables Velvet Dick tried to talk to her. To divert her with short, steadying, trivial words. His eyes expressed the sympathy that her manner kept him from voicing.

Afternoons, alone in her room upstairs, Sin could hear Velvet Dick at the piano. Repeating melodies that he had played for her, time and again. Improvisations—plaintive, pleading. The music came to her, begging her to join him against her loneliness.

The only one of them all who believed in her!

Finally his voice through the music found a response in her. And one night during the [*Continued on page 125*]



Drawings by Miriam Selss

Sin would meet Velvet Dick in the dusk of the orchard, using the apple branch as a rude ladder to the ground.

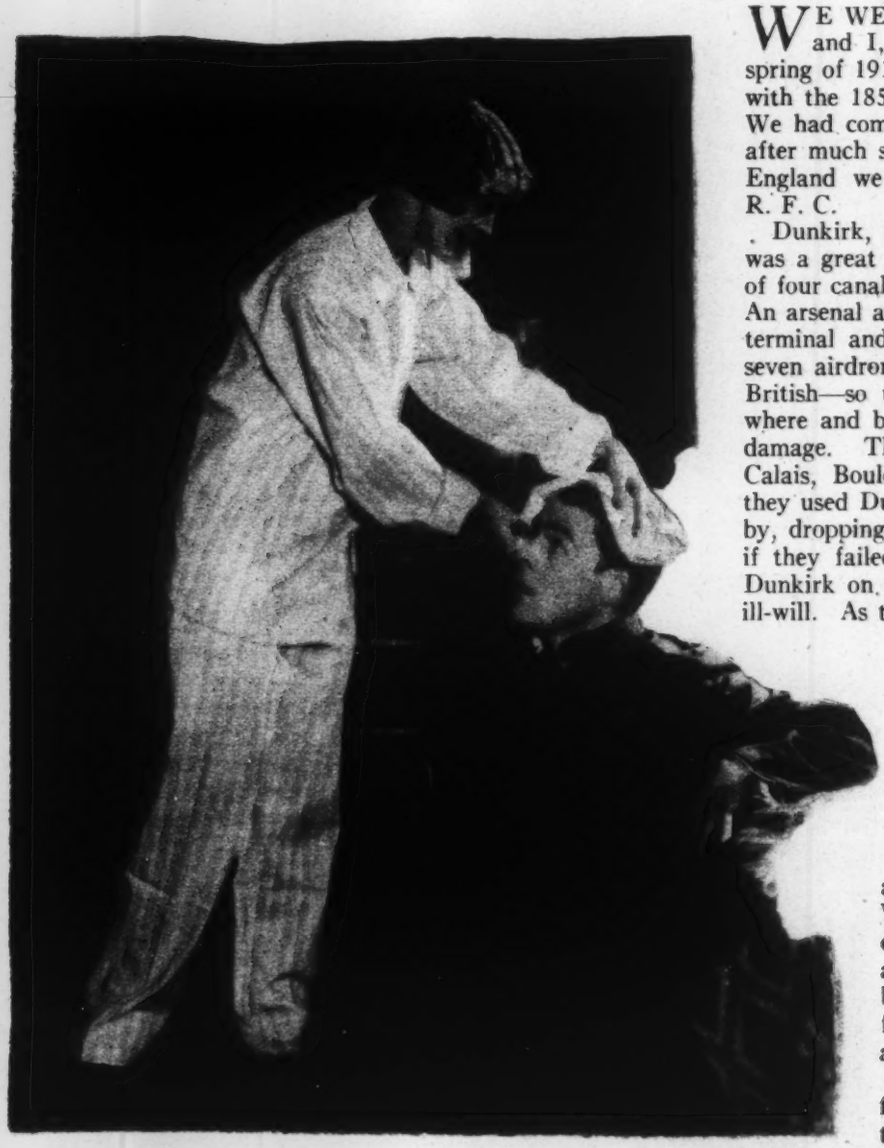
By ELLIOTT WHITE SPRINGS
one of America's First Five Aces during the War

"Down the road we went, hell bent for election, with the Hun after us."

Drawing by Golinkin

The 18-Carat ANGEL

About an American Aviator who Crashed Twice—for the Same Girl



"She was putting cold towels on my head—and she was a knock-out."

WE WERE sitting under a box car, Mac Keller and I, arguing aimlessly. It was back in the spring of 1918 and we were in France up at Dunkirk with the 185th Squadron of the Royal Flying Corps. We had commissions in the United States Army but after much shifting about and six months training in England we had ended up at the front with the R. F. C.

Dunkirk, about twenty-five miles from the lines, was a great place for bomb raids. The convergence of four canals with the harbor made it an easy target. An arsenal and three big forts, as well as the railroad terminal and harbor docks, were located there; also seven airdromes—two Belgian, one French, and four British—so the Huns could drop their bombs anywhere and be sure of doing a reasonable amount of damage. They usually went after bigger game—Calais, Boulogne or London—but on the way over they used Dunkirk as a focus to set their bomb sights by, dropping a couple of bombs to check them, and if they failed to reach their objective they bombed Dunkirk on the way back as a parting expression of ill-will. As they made several trips every clear night, and the anti-aircraft batteries put up a continual barrage, we didn't get much sleep while we were there.

This night there was a bomb raid on, which explains our presence under the box car on the edge of the airdrome. The sand-bagged dugout was full of nervous mechanics—though there is no possible protection anywhere from the direct hit of a bomb. We figured that the box car would ward off nose fuses and fragments of shrapnel, and the rails would protect us from flying bomb splinters. So we had decided in favor of a grandstand seat and the open air.

The Huns were giving us a good strafing. We judged that there were at least ten of them about, and that they were after the Handley-Page airdrome just across the canal. As it happened the

A bomb hit a hangar and it blazed at once. In our grandstand seat under the box car we began to feel very naked.

Handleys, big twin-engined bombers, were over in Hunland on a bomb raid of their own. The Huns either didn't know this or didn't care, for one Hun shut off his motor and glided down right over our heads until he passed over the canal, which could be seen plainly at night. Then he dropped a magnesium flare on a parachute which lit up the whole place like an arc-light.

"Lie down between the rails," yelled Mac. "We're going to catch hell now." But I was already between the rails—trying to burrow underneath them, in fact.

As the flare floated down the Huns flew low, dropping their bombs all over the Handley's airdrome and hangars. They hit one of the hangars with a phosphorous bomb and it blazed at once. The anti-aircraft guns were keeping up a terrific fire while the searchlights were trying in vain to hold the big Gothas in their beams. It was fairly raining nose fuses all about us. As the hangar blazed brighter, we began to feel very naked, for our own hangars showed up very clearly. One enterprizing and particularly obnoxious Hun pilot came over and dropped his load on our side of the canal. The concussion was terrific and I thought for a moment I was hit on the head.

"Are you hit?" I yelled at Mac above the noise.

"Not yet," he reassured me. "But I'm awful scared. Are you scared?"

"Can't you hear my teeth chattering?" I yelled back. "I'm a regular bowl of jelly. Do you reckon they'll hit us?"

"Sure they will. There's a Hun up there now that can look right into your face. I hope he likes it."

The light from the burning hangar was getting too bright and reflected on the wings of the Huns, so they pulled away out of range of the machine guns and Archie. Archie, the anti-aircraft guns, never hit anything. During the three months we were at Dunkirk, they never brought down one plane. But they were very disconcerting when they began getting too close with a barrage. And they must have hit something occasionally. I don't know how much trouble they caused the young Hun pilots but they certainly kept us in a fret.

The barrage continued, and we knew the Huns would be back with some friends. So we lay where we were.

"This is sure a great War," Mac said as he draped himself over an axle. "And I wouldn't miss it for a new

pair of roller skates. But I wish it wasn't so dangerous. If they keep up this sort of foolishness somebody is going to get killed. I'm ready and willing enough to die, but I'd rather not pass out in this particular manner. I've got to please the folks at home and go down in battle. I want to do this bereaving stunt properly. We might as well be in the Poor Bloody Infantry as here!"

"Yes," I said. "The recruiting officer never told me about this, and I want to see Paris before I go to join Harry Tate. But so far it's certainly been a good War—as good as any I ever heard about. I wonder if it's worth it."

"Sure it is. At least I've got nothing to regret—all my bills are paid. No, I'm wrong, there's one thing I do regret."

"What's that?"

"My last week in London. I drank too much one night."

"One night! Weren't you there but one night?"

"Oh, yes. But one night I had more than too much. You remember the night we all had dinner at Murrays with Sam. Sam insisted on individual bottles for everybody, you remember. I think you had to go out to Hounslow afterward, or at least you said you did, and I went out to the Blue Court Hotel to see poor old Jim Stone who'd been carved for appendicitis about a month before. It was way the-hell-and-gone from Piccadilly. Jim was not only up and about, but was giving a little party to some friends at the hotel. It was a pretty good party, and I got quite a skinful before it was over. I finally started back to the Savoy and there was a thick pea-soup fog sticking to everything. There were no taxis about, so I started to walk. The next thing I knew I was lost. I wandered around for a while but I couldn't find anybody, so gave it up and sat down in a doorway and went to sleep. I didn't much care where I slept anyway.

"After a while somebody shook me, and as I tried to figure it out he sat down beside me. I struck a match. It turned out that my companion was a British artillery captain, and very soused. He looked at me through his monocle and hiccoughed a couple of times.

"'Why hello, America,' says he. 'How's your hatchet? Ought never to go out without it. Hic. How's it happen that I find you here weeping for your lost love—so far away—far, far away. Well, don't weep for her as long as she's so far away—see that window yonder—the one with the light? That's a sign that my love is not lost as yet—nor far away. She's sitting up waiting on me. I'm going to get a straffing when I get in.'

"'All right,' I told him. 'That's easy. You get me down to the Savoy. I've got a big suite down there in the Court. I'll put you up for the night. I'm lost, myself.'

"'Say, I've got an idea,' he tells me. 'My wife's mean, all right, but she's a lady. Yes, sir, a lady. And once a lady, always a lady. She never cusses me out before strangers. You come on home with me and help me out.'

"I objected at first but the doorstep was getting very uncomfortable so in the end I went along with him.

"He had a nice big place—and his wife was up waiting for him, all right. And she wasn't a bit pleased about the matter. We were received cooly—very cooly.

"'We just hurried home to see you, my love,' the Captain told her. 'I've just been telling George Washington, here, what a fine wife I have, and I just brought him on here to prove it. What about a bottle of bubbly in honor of our gallant ally?'

"'All right,' she told him. 'I'd like a little myself.' So she brought in a bottle of vintage champagne and we all lit into it. I think the Captain must have exaggerated her meanness, for she warmed up considerably in a few minutes. She was a Canadian and knew some people that I did, and we got very friendly and had to have another bottle to drink to them. We both remarked that it was a very small world after all and got very chummy. By that time the Captain was done in, so after we'd stretched him out, I departed. She told me the way to the Savoy, and this time I found a stray taxi."

"Well, what's that to regret?" I asked him.

"Shut up until I finish. I had a suite over in the Court, and by the time I got there I was good and tight. I just did make it and that was all. I couldn't find any lights so I tried to undress in the dark.

"Whose paper is this?" I demanded.

I had on those tight boots of mine and gave one of them a terrific pull. I must have gone over backwards and hit my head against something sharp, for everything went black.

"When I came to, and the room stopped whirling so fast, I was propped up against the bed with blood all over me, and my head felt like it had just exploded. But now comes the meat of the whole story. Here's a whole regiment of niggers in the wood pile. There was an

eighteen-carat, aged-in-the-wood angel, putting cold towels on my head and wiping the blood off me. Lord, she was a knock-out! Big eyes, golden hair, hot damn Willie!

"'Excuse me please,' I sort of murmured, 'there's a mistake. I'm in the wrong room. Don't get scared. I'll go right quick. I'm sorry to have busted in here.'

"'No,' she says, 'that's all right. It's your room. I'm the one that doesn't belong here. Hold your head back and let me see if I can make a bandage for it. You've got a nasty cut, but I'm afraid to call a doctor at this hour. And I'm sure it's nothing serious.'

"I tried to look at her, but my eyes wouldn't focus. She was sort of blurred all the time, but even at that was one of the Seven Wonders of the World. The thing that got me was the fact that she was wearing my pajamas! I thought at first that the likker was tricking me. But, sure enough, they were pajamas—and they were my pet purple pair.

"While she was bandaging my head I dozed off again, but she woke me up and got my boots off and got me to bed. Once my head went down, it stayed down. To save my immortal soul I couldn't raise it from that pillow. I tried to thank her and made a couple of passes at kissing her hand, and then drew a complete blank. When I woke up she was gone. Now, what do you think of that?"

"It's a good story," I admitted. "Am I supposed to believe all of it?"

"I don't give a damn whether you do or not."

"Well, what next?"

"That's all. I came to next morning like a thunder storm. I had the sorest, biggest, softest, heaviest head that mortal man ever achieved. A doc took three stitches in the gash on top of it. I went on out to Hounslow feeling like Atlas himself. The lady left a note. She said:

Dear Sir:

Thanks for the accommodations. Such gentlemen are rare. When the cock crew this morning, I decided that you would live and abandoned you to your fate. The good die young—and sleep well. So please be careful!

A Foolish Virgin.

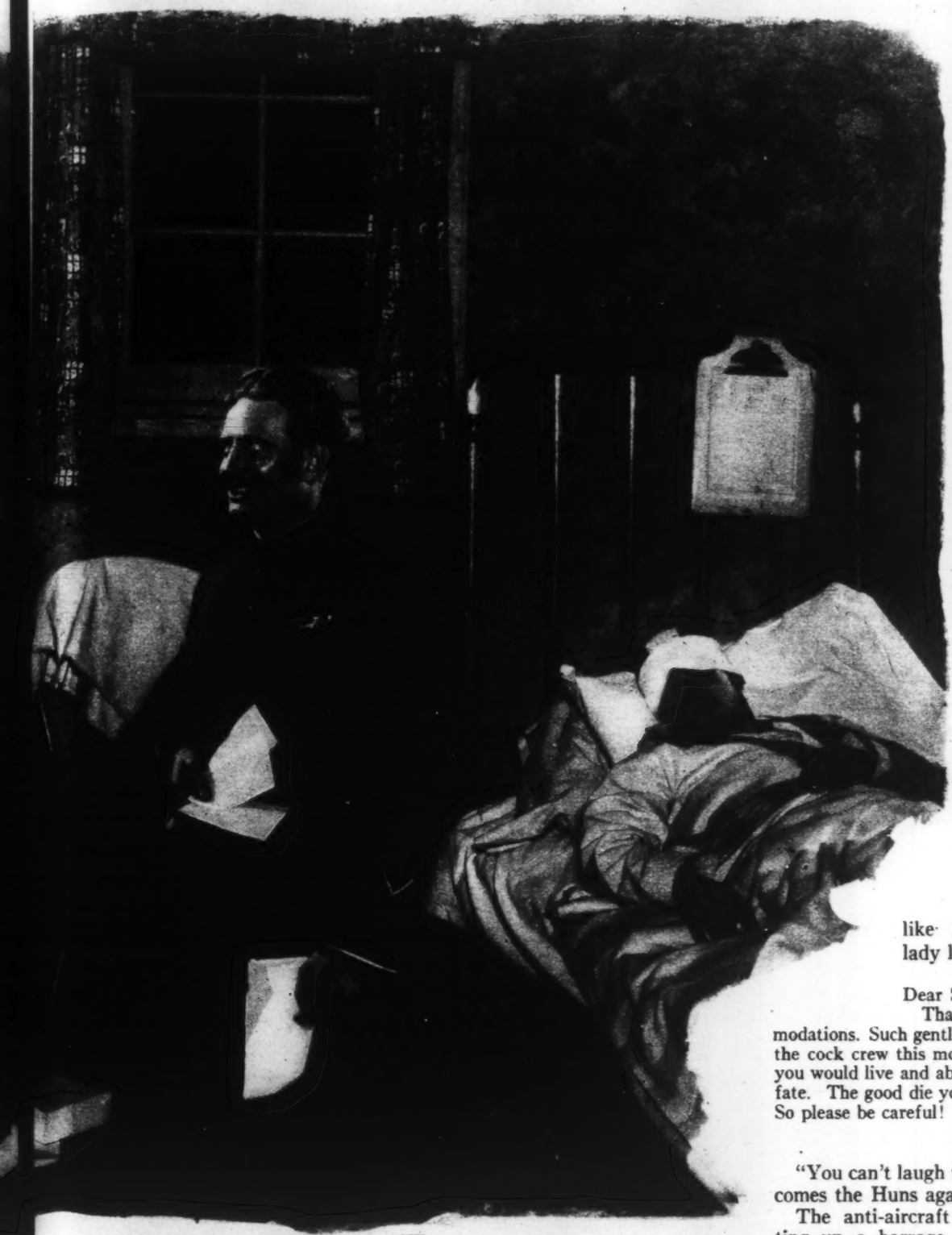
"You can't laugh that off! Listen, here comes the Huns again!"

The anti-aircraft batteries were putting up a barrage, and again we were deluged with nose fuses and shell fragments.

This time the Gothas left us alone and went after Fort Mardick about two miles from us. There were only three or four of them, and they dropped their bombs quickly and went out to sea.

Soon Mournful Mary, the siren in Dunkirk, sounded the All Clear. We crawled out from under the car and went back to the Mess.

All the officers were gathered at the bar, laughing at two of them who had just come [*Continued on page 120*]



"I'll have to chase you away," she said, ignoring the question.

That McCLURE GIRL

By John Held, Jr.

1. *George made good. He fixed Patsy up as a Lady of the Ensemble—which doesn't necessarily refer to her costume. "Stick to me, Patsy," he said, leaving her with the producer, "and you'll never wear mustard plasters on the cold winter evenings." Jack Dunlap, the producer, had ideas of his own, however. He outstepped George by actually giving her a part.*

2. *Not much of a part, of course. The scene was at Mrs. Chumleigh-Hayden's house party, when the Junior League girls come downstairs dressed for bridge. But first they sing, "We've Got Those Debu-taunting, Debu-haunting Blues." Well, Patsy had two speeches, the first being: "My word, girls, the Prince is dropping in for a rubber!" (And who will blame the Prince!)*

Patsy Gets Cast for the "Forget-Me-Not Fillies"

—and She LOOKS the Part, at Least

¶ Patsy McClure is after the Romance of Life, with the accent on the roam. She doesn't care how many jobs she must lose to find a boss who has a sense of chivalry and all that. She gave up plugging a switchboard a couple of months ago, opened the exits for Freddie, her poor-but-honest boy friend, and joined the office force of the Jigfield Dollies Theatrical Company as a hopeful typist. But she wasn't the type. George Weurtz, the casting director, thought she might be light-footed enough for the chorus, having taken her Charlestoning at a mean supper club. To her surprise she saw Freddie there, opulently wearing what seemed to be a one-man dinner coat. Freddie tried to date her, but she was listening to George's promise—George was so original!—to put her on the stage.

3. *But poor Patsy, in the confusion of the opening night, gave her second speech first—which was: "Stop that garter-snapping, girls! Here comes the chaperone." Heartbroken over her mistake (it made the Prince's entrance most embarrassing), Patsy apologized to the producer. He was indulging in a "there-little-girl-don't-cry" attitude when George got an eyeful.*

(Poor Patsy, eh! Wait till next month!)

4. *"Say, who discovered Miss McClure—was it Lieut. Byrd!" says George, belligerent as a box-office clerk on a sold-out Saturday. "If you mean icebergs," says Jack, "you're just about cold enough to blame her for a slip that even a Peggy Wood might have made!" And so they mixed it—with poor Patsy clinking her pearls in anguish and wondering what's to become of her career now!*

The Two Spinsters

"I WANT you, William. Why do you keep so far away?"

ERNESTON GRANT was without doubt a very first-class detective, but as a wayfarer across Devonshire byroads with only a map and a compass to help him he was simply a washout. Even his fat little white dog, Flip, sheltered under a couple of rugs, after two hours of cold, wet, and purposeless journeying, looked at him reproachfully. With an exclamation of something like despair, Grant brought his sobbing automobile to a standstill at the top of one of the wickedest hills a Ford had ever been asked to face even on first speed, and sat looking around him.

In every direction the outlook was the same. There were rolling stretches of common divided by wooded valleys of incredible depth. There was no sign of agricultural land, no sign of the working of any human being upon the endless acres, and not a single vehicle had he passed upon the way. There were no sign-posts, no villages, no shelter of any sort. The one thing that abounded was rain—rain and mist. Gray wreaths of it hung over the commons, making them seem like falling fragments of cloud, blotted out the horizon, hung over every hopeful break in the distance—an encircling, enveloping obscurity. Then, vying with the mists in wetness, came the level rain—rain which had seemed beautiful early in the afternoon, slanting from the heavens onto the mountainside, but which had long ago lost all pretense to being anything but damnably offensive, chilling, miserably wet. Flip, whose nose only now appeared uncovered, sniffed digustedly, and Grant, as he lit a pipe, cursed slowly but fluently under his breath. What a country! Miles of byways without a single direction post, endless stretches without a glimpse of a farmhouse or village. And the map! Grant solemnly cursed the man who had ordained it, the printer who had bound it, and the shop where he had bought it. When he had finished Flip ventured upon a gentle bark of approval.

"Somewhere or other," Grant muttered to himself, "should lie the village of Nidd. The last sign-post in this blasted region indicated six miles to Nidd. Since then we have traveled at least twelve, there has been no turning to the left or to the right, and the village of Nidd is as though it had never been."

His eyes pierced the gathering darkness ahead. Through a slight uplifting in the clouds it seemed to him that he could see for miles, and nowhere was there any sign of village or of human habitation. He thought of the road along which they had come, and the idea of retracing it made him shiver. It was at that moment, when bending forward to watch the steam from his boiling radiator, that he saw away on the left a feebly flickering light. Instantly he was out of the car. He scrambled onto the stone wall and looked eagerly in the direction from which he had seen it. There was without doubt a light; around that light must be a house. His eyes could even trace the rough track that led to it. He climbed back to his place, thrust in his clutch, drove for about forty yards, and then paused at a gate. The track on the other side was terrible, but then so was the road. He opened it and drove through, bending over his task now with every sense absorbed.

Apparently traffic here, if traffic existed at all, consisted only of an occasional farm wagon of the kind he was beginning to know all about—springless, with holes in the

"THERE'S a dead man in the farmhouse down the road," Grant shouted.

Drawings by Arthur Litle

By E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

The Story of a Lost Traveler who Stumbled into the Mystery of Another's Past

boarded floor and with great, slowly turning wheels. Nevertheless he made progress, skirted the edge of a tremendous combe, passed, to his joy, a semi-cultivated field, through another gate, up it seemed suddenly into the clouds, and down a fantastic corkscrew way until at last the light faced him directly ahead. He passed a deserted garden and pulled up before a broken-down iron gate which he had to get out of the car to open. He punctiliously closed it after him, traversed a few yards of grass-grown, soggy avenue, and finally reached the door of what might once have been a very tolerable farmhouse, but which appeared now, notwithstanding the flickering light burning upstairs, to be one of the most melancholy edifices the mind of man could conceive.

With scant anticipations in the way of a welcome, but with immense relief at the thought of a roof, Grant descended and knocked upon the oak door. Inside he could hear almost at once the sound of a match being struck; the light of a candle shone through the blindless windows of a room on his left. There were footsteps in the hall, and the door was opened. Grant found himself confronted by a woman who held the candle so high that it half illumined, half shadowed her features. There was a certain stateliness, however, about her figure which he realized even in those first few seconds at the door.

"What do you want?" she asked.

Grant, as he removed his hat, fancied that the answer was sufficiently obvious. Rain streamed from every angle of his be-mackintoshed body. His face was pinched with the cold.

"I am a traveler who has lost his way," he explained. "For hours I have been trying to find a village and inn. Yours is the first human habitation I have seen. Can you give me a night's shelter?"

"Is there any one with you?" the woman inquired.

"I am alone," he replied. "Except for my little dog," he added, as he heard Flip's hopeful yap.

The woman considered.

"You had better drive your car into the shed on the left-hand side of the house," she said. "Afterwards you can come in. We will do what we can for you. It is not much."

"I am very grateful, madam," Grant declared in all sincerity.

He found the shed, which was occupied only by two farm

"YOURS is the first human habitation I have seen."

SIX miles to Nidd. But Nidd was as though it had never been.

carts in an incredible state of decay. Afterwards he released Flip and returned to the front door which had been left open. Guided by the sound of crackling logs, he found his way to a huge stone kitchen. In a high-backed chair in front of the fire, seated with her hands upon her knees but gazing eagerly towards the door as though watching for his coming, was another woman, also tall, approaching middle age, perhaps, but still of striking presence and fine features. The woman who had admitted him was bending over the fire. He looked from one to the other in amazement. They were fearfully and wonderfully alike.

"It is very kind of you, ladies, to give us shelter," he began. "Flip! Behave yourself, Flip!"

A huge sheep dog had occupied the space in front of the fire. Flip without a moment's hesitation had run towards him, yapping fiercely. The dog, with an air of mild surprise, rose to his feet and looked inquiringly downwards. Flip insinuated herself into the vacant place, stretched herself out with an air of content, and closed her eyes.

"I must apologize for my little dog," Grant continued. "She is very cold."

The sheep dog retreated a few yards and sat on his haunches considering the matter. Meanwhile the woman who had opened the door produced a cup and saucer from a cupboard, a loaf of bread, and a small side of bacon, from which she cut some slices.

"Draw your chair to the fire," she invited. "We have very little to offer you, but I will prepare something to eat."

"You are good Samaritans indeed," Grant declared fervently.

He seated himself opposite the woman who as yet had scarcely spoken or removed her eyes from his. The likeness between the two was an amazing thing, as was also their silence. They wore similar clothes—heavy, voluminous clothes they seemed to him—and their hair, brown and slightly be-sprinkled with gray, was arranged in precisely the same fashion. Their clothes belonged to another world, as did also their speech and manners, yet there was a curious but unmistakable distinction about them both.

"As a matter of curiosity," Grant asked, "how far am I from the village of Nidd?"

"Not far," the woman who was sitting motionless opposite to him answered. "To any one knowing the way, near enough. Strangers are foolish to trust themselves to these roads. Many people are lost who try."

"Yours is a lonely homestead," he ventured.

"We were born here," the woman answered. "Neither my sister nor I have felt the desire for travel."

The bacon began to sizzle. Flip opened one eye, licked her mouth and sat up. In a few minutes the meal was prepared. A high-backed oak chair was placed at the end of the table. There was tea, a dish of bacon and eggs, a great loaf of bread and a small pat of butter. Grant took his place.

"You have had your supper?" he asked.

"Long ago," the woman who had prepared his meal replied. "Please to serve yourself."

She sank into the other oak chair exactly opposite her sister. Grant, with Flip by his side, commenced his meal. Neither had tasted food for many hours and for a time both were happily oblivious to anything save the immediate surroundings. Presently, however, as he poured out his second cup of tea, Grant glanced towards his hostesses. They had moved their chairs slightly away from the fire and were both watching him—watching him without curiosity, yet with a certain puzzling intentness. It occurred to him then for the first time that although both had in turn addressed him, neither had addressed the other.

"I can't tell you how good this tastes," Grant said presently. "I am afraid I must seem awfully greedy."

"You have been for some time without food, perhaps," one of them said.

"Since half past twelve."

"Are you traveling for pleasure?"

"I thought so before today," he answered, with a smile to which there was no response.

The woman who had admitted him moved her chair an inch or two nearer to his. He noticed with some curiosity that immediately she had done so her sister did the same thing.

"What is your name?"

"Erneston Grant," he replied. "May I know whom I have to thank for this hospitality?"

"My name is Mathilda Craske," the first one announced.

"And mine is Annabelle Craske," the other echoed.

"You live here alone?" he ventured.

"We live here entirely alone," Mathilda acquiesced. "It is our pleasure."

GRANT was more than ever puzzled. Their speech was subject to the usual Devonshire intonation and soft slurring of the vowels, but otherwise it was almost curiously correct. The idea of their living alone in such a desolate part, however, seemed incredible.

"You farm here, perhaps?" he persisted. "You have laborers' cottages, or some one close at hand?"

Mathilda shook her head.

"The nearest hovel," she confided, "is three miles distant. We have ceased to occupy ourselves with the land. We have five cows—they give us no trouble—and some fowls."

"It is a lonely life," he murmured.

"We do not find it so," Annabelle said stiffly.

He turned his chair towards them. Flip, with a little gurgle of satisfaction, sprang onto his knees.

"Where do you do your marketing?" he asked.

"A carrier from Exford," Mathilda told him, "calls every Saturday. Our wants are simple."

The large room, singularly empty of furniture as he noticed looking round, was [*Continued on page 120*]

Mardi Gras Madness

By
EDWIN DIAL TORGERSON

She Had Played at Love Always—and Then One Day Love Played with Her

"SOUTHERN chivalry," observed Millicent cuttingly, "is a fine theatrical pose—without depth or sincerity, or any genuine regard for women."

The girl who sat in the seat with her rebuked her gently. "You haven't had a great deal of experience with it, have you, dear?"

"Oh, the men get up and give their seats to women on street cars, and take off their hats in elevators, and bow and scrape and pretend to put their women on very high pedestals. But it's all veneer. Scratch the surface and what do you find?"

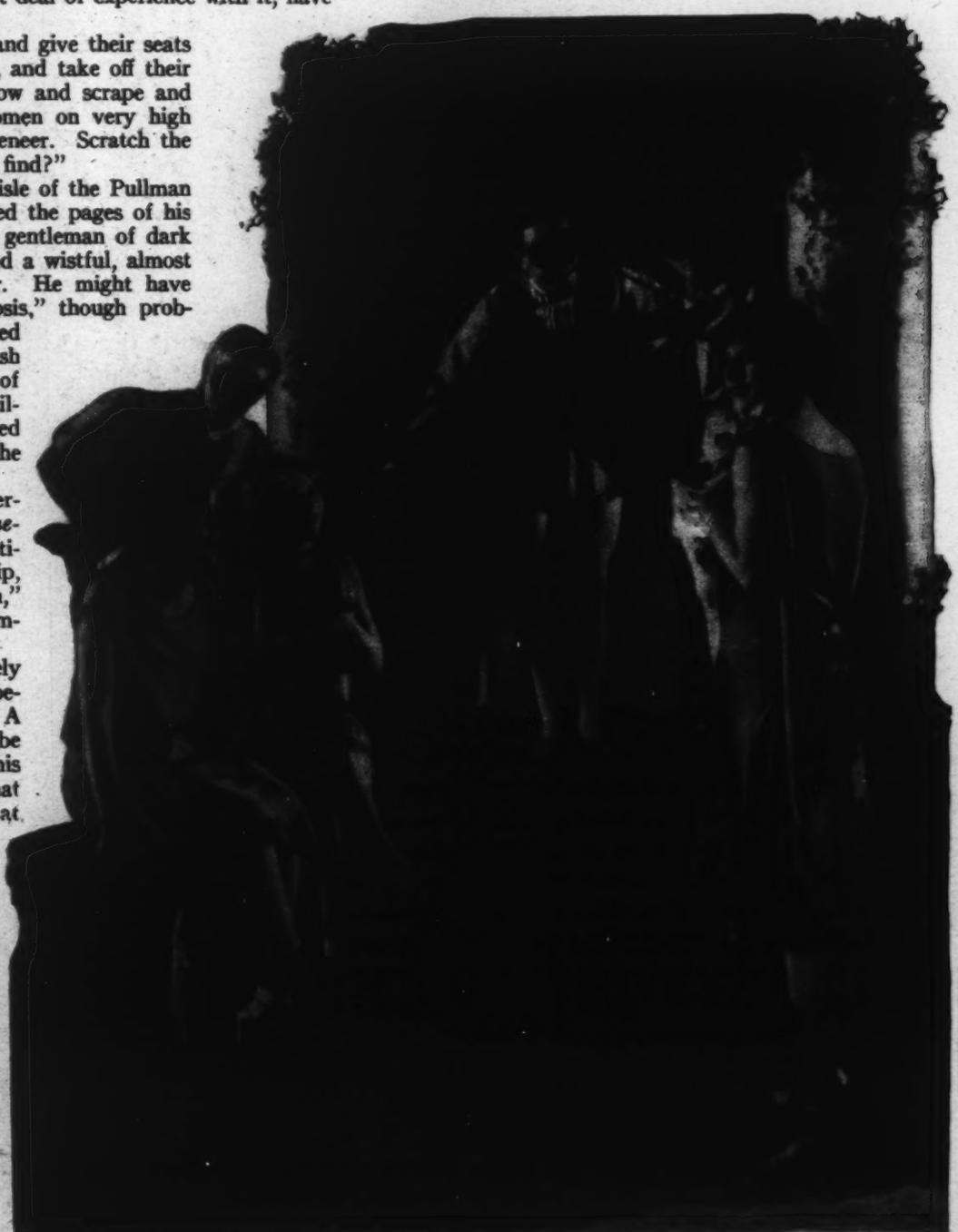
The man across the aisle of the Pullman stirred uneasily and riffled the pages of his book. He was a young gentleman of dark and reproachful eyes, and a wistful, almost languid, ease of manner. He might have been reading "Thanatopsis," though probably he wasn't. He paused to observe the white flash of the sun on the wings of sea gulls, and the tiny trailings of smoke that marked the ship lanes out in the Gulf.

"Why, I think it's perfectly beautiful for *somebody* to maintain that attitude of woman-worship, even if it is an illusion," argued Millicent's companion.

"And that is precisely why I detest it, Eula; because it is illusion. A Northern man may not be so gorgeously sweet to his women, but he means what he says — sometimes, at least!"

Millicent's eye caught the dark and reproachful eye of the young gentleman across the aisle, and Millicent flushed. It was an almost unprecedented thing for Millicent to flush, for Millicent was known to her intimates as a charming little ice-bag—one of flowered chintz with a blue ribbon around its neck, if that's what delicate ice-bags wear, but nevertheless an ice-bag. And ice-bags seldom flush.

"There's one of them ogling us now," accused Millicent.



MILLICENT'S first bid was from a troubadour.

"Why, he's not!" defended Eula. "He only looked once, and can you blame him? He's probably a hot-headed Southerner who'll go out and kill the conductor, you'll make him so mad talking about his country!"

"I'm not talking about his country. I'm talking about the silly *poseurs* you want me to rave about. Just because you're in love with one of these fire-eaters———"

"They're not fire-eaters! They're just proud men with a delicate sense of honor, who—who——"

"Who think it's all in their day's work to tell every woman they meet that they're in love with her," finished Millicent. "I know them!"

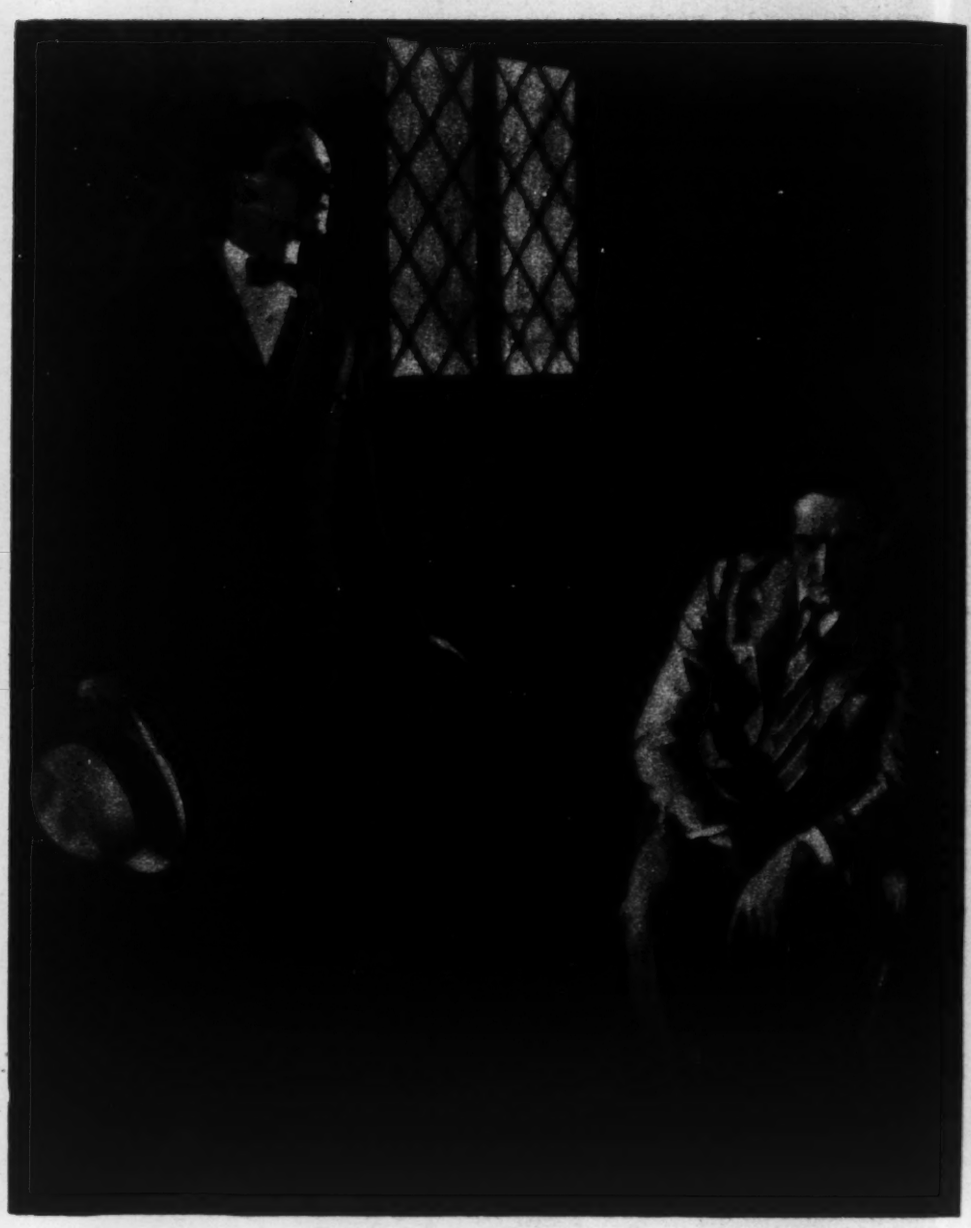
"Humph!" said Eula. "I just hope you'll fall in love yourself, and somebody breaks your heart! You're the *coldest* thing, Millicent! I don't see why men like you at all."

"You flatter me, and belittle the poor men woefully. It is quite a barren subject, after all. Let's talk about Mardi Gras. What is it like? Sort of a state fair, isn't it?"

"State fair!" Eula gasped. "Why, it's the most perfectly, thrilling marvelous experience you've ever had! You'll never forget it as long as you live, Millicent!"

"It was last year at Mardi Gras, of course, that you met your Clement." She explained away Eula's enthusiasm with one malicious thrust.

"Yes, but you just wait! Constance has a way of arranging the most wonderful time for her visitors! She has been queen of the carnival, and queen of half a dozen carnival balls, and everybody in town helps to give her visitors a good time."



"Fool!" The newcomer pushed Millicent's companion

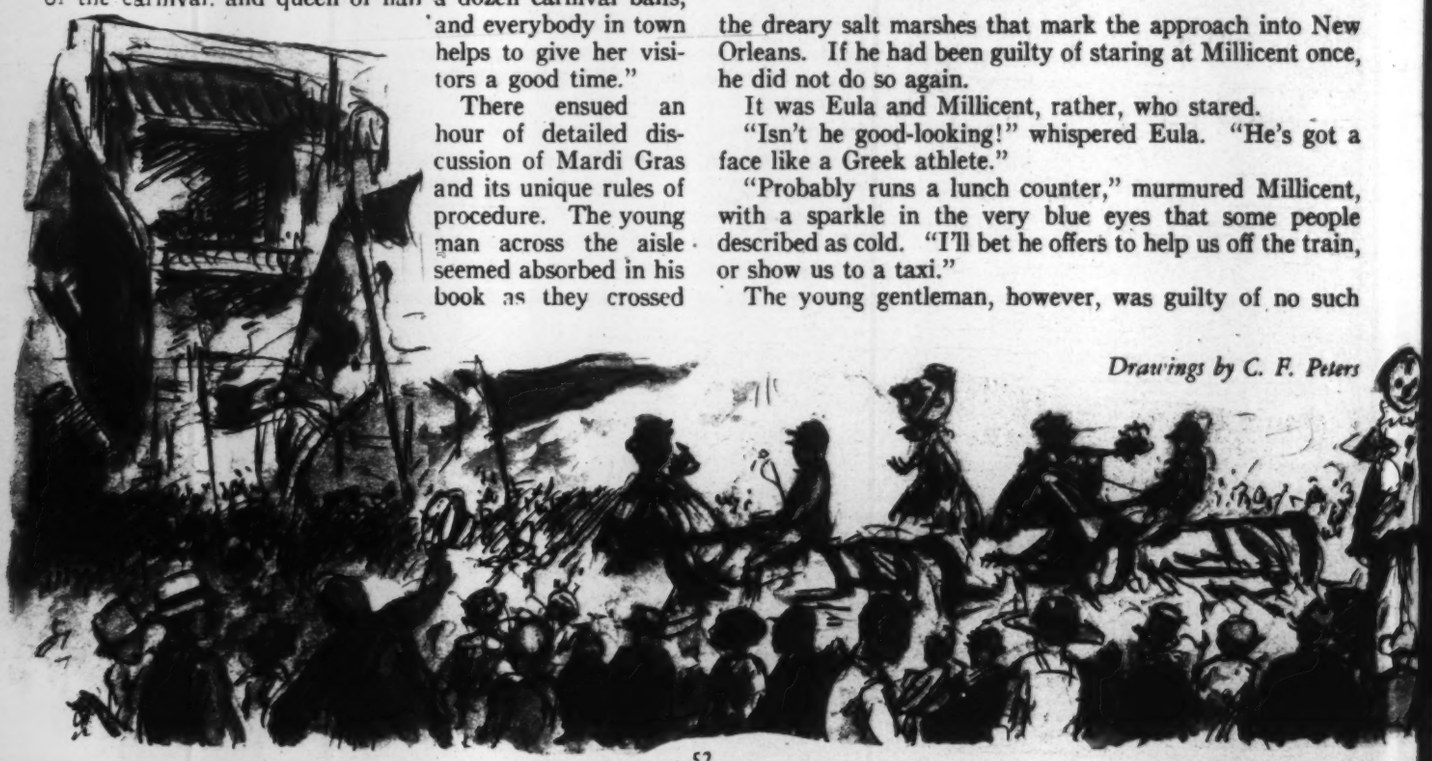
There ensued an hour of detailed discussion of Mardi Gras and its unique rules of procedure. The young man across the aisle seemed absorbed in his book as they crossed the dreary salt marshes that mark the approach into New Orleans. If he had been guilty of staring at Millicent once, he did not do so again.

It was Eula and Millicent, rather, who stared.

"Isn't he good-looking!" whispered Eula. "He's got a face like a Greek athlete."

"Probably runs a lunch counter," murmured Millicent, with a sparkle in the very blue eyes that some people described as cold. "I'll bet he offers to help us off the train, or show us to a taxi."

The young gentleman, however, was guilty of no such



Drawings by C. F. Peters

into a chair. "Mademoiselle, I hoped to prevent this."

gallantry. He disappeared in the crowd at the station as soon as the train arrived.

Only a porter attended the two girls until they were sighted by the animated Constance Garnett and escorted to the Garnett limousine.

The carnival season was well advanced, though Mardi Gras—"Fat Tuesday" itself—was still more than ten days off. New Orleans, quaint capital of the kingdom of unrestraint, seeks only a mild excuse as a signal to celebrate something, and Mardi Gras, instead of being a one-day festival, becomes officially a matter of days, and unofficially a matter of weeks.

Crowds everywhere—at the theaters, in the old restaurants where food amazingly delicious may be had, in the parks, in the streets—crowds everywhere, laughing and chattering. Here good humor, happiness, zest of living, the Latin temperament tickling dull care in the ribs.

Before she was aware of it, Millicent had contracted the contagion. She lost, in a measure, the complacent reserve which had won her a reputation for *hauteur*. She entered into the spirit of the carnival.

At the Garnett home she met swarms of people; names she could never hope to remember, names and temperaments liberally flavored with French and Spanish. And not one of the soft-spoken cavaliers made love to Millicent until—

The *bal masque* of the Society of Myths.

A glittering street parade had preceded it. A parade of incredibly dazzling floats and caparisoned horses, illumined by red fire torches in the hands of robed retainers marching alongside. A parade of innumerable bands, and maskers cavorting deliriously, shouting and laughing from their vantage points on the floats, throwing endless quantities of confetti and many-colored serpentine. The floats were huge and shimmering creations of silk and tinsel and *papier-mâché*—dragons with nodding heads and swishing tails, fairy lace and gauze and glittering stars, grottoes and caverns haunted by darting elves—the product of months of toil by scenic artists who had been warned to spare no extravagance.

And the ball at the old French Opera was a chapter filched from the past. To-day was masked and bedizened

with the semblance of romance, care was sent off into exile, and mundane things ceased to exist.

The King and the Queen were there, the center of a resplendent court. The Queen wore regal robes ablaze with diamonds and emeralds fabulously valuable, and her maids were clad almost as magnificently. The boxes of the Opera were adorned by personages of wealth and fashion, and the great auditorium was a spectacle of youth and beauty in gala assemblage—tier on tier of gleaming shoulders and gleaming shirt fronts—the belles and beaux of old New Orleans.

IT WAS totally unlike all other masquerade balls Millicent had attended. Here only the men were masked, the mysterious members of the Society of Myths, whose identity was guarded by the threat of summary expulsion of any masker who dared divulge one of the society's secrets. There was no unmasking at midnight. A girl might do all the guessing she pleased, but the name of the masker who danced with her remained forever unrevealed.

To further defeat the possibility of recognition, there was a confusing similarity of the masker's costumes. A dozen or more masqueraders who had ridden one float were identically dressed, and were approximately of the same height and build. All were elves who accompanied the float of the elves; all who rode the troubadour float were troubadours.

A masker needed no introduction, and if he had not made all his engagements in advance, he could dance with any girl in the audience whose appearance pleased him. Most of the "call-outs" from the audience, however, were formal invitations arranged weeks in advance.

Millicent's first bid was from a troubadour. A page sought her out and escorted her to the stage, where her masker awaited her.

Instead of the expressionless wire "dough-face" which most of the maskers used, he wore a black silk mask, and all that Millicent could see of his face was most commendable. A nice nose, such part of it as was visible; a well-appointed chin and lips that smiled engagingly.

"*Ma demoiselle des neiges,*" he murmured with a courtly bow.

"Your what?" queried Millicent.

"My maiden of the snows," said the troubadour. "Out of the North, with the blue of winter skies serene in her steadfast eyes. Perchance a poor troubadour may sing of his fair lady of the snows?"

"Your eloquence o'erwhelms me, Sir Masker," mocked Millicent, as they danced. "We have met before, it seems, yet I cannot recall so moving a voice, or two-bladed compliments so keen as yours. You infer that I am cold?"

"Cold with the beauty of the moon on an icy night. And you dance, sweetheart, like a moonbeam! May I call you sweetheart?"

"Why waste effort trying to stop you? I fear, Sir Masker, your conversation would be barren without the word."

"You imply that I use it frequently?"

"All women, no doubt, are your sweethearts. It seems to be the prevailing custom to tell them that—generally—in New Orleans."

The troubadour sighed. "All women may be loved, and yet but one called sweetheart. You are that one for me, dearest of all, O maiden of the snows, because you are—unattainable!"

"And why unattainable, O troubadour?"

"It is ever so. The fair ones who come as visitors deceive us cruelly into believing they are free—and then we learn their hearts are already pledged. So it will be with you."

"And if I told you mine was not pledged?"

"Still," said the melancholy masker, "you would be unattainable."

"'Tis better to have loved and lost, et cetera," gibed Millicent.

"No! Loved and kept—forever!" He held her closer. "For Mardi Gras—the season of make-believe—you are mine! And when the gray dawn of Ash Wednesday comes creeping in at the windows of our hearts, you will be gone and I shall go—back to the cruelties of life."

"Is life so cruel to you then, O troubadour?" Millicent's voice held an unwonted note. It seemed all like some old romance.

"Life is cruel with the beauty of things we seek," said the troubadour. "Things had and things held become tarnished with possession, lady of the snow. Only things never to be grasped are always beautiful."

"How nice," murmured Millicent, "to be content with things you merely hope for!"

"They are the only things worth while that we may keep. You are beyond my grasp, desire of my desires, yet I shall have you always."

"In memory, you mean?"

"Always, as you are now—with the light in your eyes both luring and forbidding, and lips that I long to kiss——"

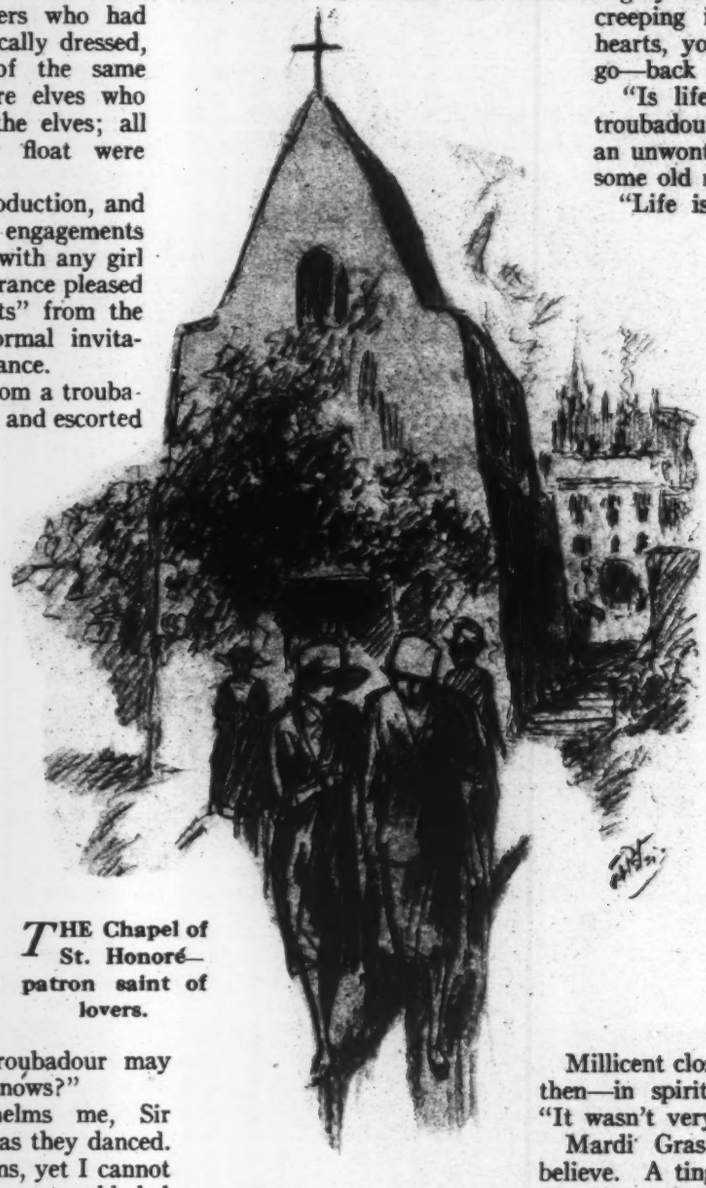
"But never shall?" She heard herself, like another person, whispering, and had no time to wonder at her boldness.

"Never," said the troubadour gravely, "never—save in spirit."

Millicent closed her eyes. "I kissed you then—in spirit," she said mischievously. "It wasn't very satisfactory."

Mardi Gras! The season of make-believe. A tingling in her blood, like the fire of a seductive potion. Unreal, all of it—this glittering whirl of gayety, this troubadour softly playing at love. Mardi Gras madness! It was not the real Millicent who had thrown the gauntlet of challenge at the feet of this masked stranger.

"That is because of the lights, and the argus-eyed throng," the troubadour was saying. "Let us go where



THE Chapel of St. Honoré—patron saint of lovers.

only the stars can see us."

He took her to a quaint, small gallery built far above the street, a gallery just large enough for two. A bedlam of merriment came to their ears from the sidewalks below. Street maskers and parading groups of roysterers tossed clouds of confetti, wielded canes with feathered "ticklers" on the end, threw rubber balls attached to elastic retrievers. Horns and clackers and cow-bells made a mighty discord of revelry. Masked men chucked masked maidens under the chin—rollicking laughter—unrestrained hilarity . . .

And above the dark, gray old town that seemed to sleep tolerantly deaf to the play of her noisy children, hung the quiet stars of a late sub-tropical winter.

"Where the stars can see us, you said." Again the whispering voice of the inner Millicent, long kept in suppressed silence.

"Only the stars . . ."

Her hand had been clasped in his, and he drew it suddenly to his lips and kissed the trembling tips of her fingers.

Then—"I love you!"

"Make—believe," faltered Millicent, faintly alarmed by a sense of failing self-reliance. She laughed in an odd, fluttering way. "And you never have seen me before! How fervent you philanderers can be!"

"Believe me," he pleaded, "I have loved you since first I heard your voice, and saw the blue depths of promise in your eyes!"

"Millicent! Is it true? You are not really angry after all?"

"You met me at Constance's?" Millicent asked slyly.

"It doesn't matter where. Perhaps only in a dream. I love you!"

"Then surely I may see your face, troubadour. Unmask for me!"

HE DENIED her wish, gently. "We all wear masks, always. It is only when our faces are concealed, as mine is now, that we are truly unmasked. For now the heart speaks willingly. Gray Lent will come soon enough, to tear the mask from our gayety and our love."

With a sudden, tender strength he gathered her in his arms and kissed her. Millicent went rigid with fright, and then lay limp and pliant in his embrace.

"Oh, don't!" she pleaded, and began to cry.

He kissed her wet lashes, and his voice was soothing and sorrowful. "Is it because you are—happy—or have I frightened you?"

She clung to him as though for protection, and did not reply. She feared her voice would betray her emotion.

"*Ma demoiselle des neiges! Je vous adore!* I am so sorry! I shall go away, and never see you again."

"It is only—make-believe," she said, trembling.

"All joys are make-believe—all have their Ash Wednesdays. Here! I give you this, beloved. The favor of a poor troubadour who would not be forgotten."

He drew from his little finger a curious black ring, with an oblong setting peculiarly raised and carved. He kissed the index finger of her left hand, and placed the ring upon it.

"It is the death-philter ring of my ancestors," he said gravely. "Four centuries have passed, and it has never been out of the possession of——" He checked his words suddenly.

"Death-philter?" Millicent held it up to the dim light. "Poison?"

"It once contained poison," said the troubadour. "A knight went off to the wars, [*Continued on page 116*]

"Look at Otley," whispered Tony

By

WARNER FABIAN

author of

"Flaming Youth"

SUMMER

In the Two Preceding Instalments:

"NO ONE pauses to consider," Martin Cole declared, "the danger to which abandoned husbands are exposed when their wives desert New York for the summer—leaving them marooned upon the lonely island of Manhattan, haunt of the most seductive species of sirens!"

His words were greeted with acclaim by the group who frequented the popular Club Recherché nightly. They were all summer bachelors—married men whose wives had decamped during the hot weather—Martin Cole, playwright, Prenny Smith, alderman of a silk-stocking ward, Beverly Greenway, and even the shy Professor Blakely. Dick Otley alone traveled under the banner of the unmarried.

Most frequently to be seen in this night club circle were the lovely actress, Willowdean French—and Derry Thomas. Willowdean had recently taken an interest in the psychologist, Professor Blakely, who was directing the hypnotic scene in Cole's latest production.

Derry Thomas had allied herself with this crowd intentionally. She willingly had promised her employer, Mr. Ostrander, a dealer in antiques, that she would not marry for three years; a condition he had made prior to putting her in charge of his affairs while he was in Europe. It was not marriage Derry was seeking but frivolity. And she thought to play safe by choosing married men as playmates.

But soon her most satisfying playmate, Bev Greenway, startled her by asking her to marry him. His marriage had been a failure, he told her. And then the prominent Tony Landor, whose acquaintance she had made one after-

in Derry's ear. Otley was staring, bewitched, at the slim, dark woman who had just arrived.

The Most Revealing Story Yet of Night Life in New York

BACHELORS

noon shopping when he bought her a length of copper-colored dress material she could not afford, came into her life again. And Derry began to feel less secure.

And finally Dick Otley! Derry had been amused and a little frightened at Otley's deliberate pursuit of her. But when he suggested a moonlight sail in his sloop, she accepted—and armed herself melodramatically with Prenny Smith's parting gift—a revolver.

They were well out of sight of the fog-hung shores of Long Island when Otley approached Derry and caught her in his arms. Derry went stiff as he pressed his hand against the revolver in her blouse.

"If it comes to force and arms," said Otley, taking the weapon from her, "where do you stand now?"

CHAPTER X

LIKE a despairing child, bereft of its toy, Derry said forlornly.

"That's *my* revolver, Dick. Give it back to me, please!"

Here she got her second startling surprise. "Certainly," he said, and laid it on the seat by her.

She did not pick it up but sat wide-eyed, studying him.

"Then wh-wh-why did you take it away from me?"

"To show you how foolish you are to distrust me."

"I don't," she cried impulsively. "But—but I'm more afraid of you than I was before. Only, in a different way."

"You needn't be—of me."

Did he mean "You have more cause to be afraid of

Otley did not hide his annoyance at Tony's presence, though Derry introduced the men with her best smile.

yourself"? Well, there might be something in that. She asked: "Where are we going now?"

"Do you see that far light yonder?"

"The high one? Yes. It's all clear ahead; no fog at all. Isn't that funny!"

"Omen," he answered. "Forget the dim past and head for the clear future."

"What kind of a future is that light?"

"That's Ranger's Point. We can make it by morning and get an early train in."

"Then it's an all night trip. I don't care!" Derry, in repossession of her weapon of defense, was in wild spirits.

"I think you can afford to give me that much companionship."

Would she ever give him more, Derry mused, realizing the attraction of his quiet resourcefulness and competency, his controlled self-will. And yet, probably not. There was something about him that made him less dangerous to her type of woman than was Beverly Greenway.

With Bev you want to give, she reflected, he's such a helpless, appealing kid. There's nothing of that about Dick. You've got to be on your defense with him every minute. But defenses sometimes break down. She could imagine that, too.

"If I fall asleep, shoot me at sunrise," she laughed. "I've got to get some rest or I'll be dead for Martin Cole's opening tomorrow."

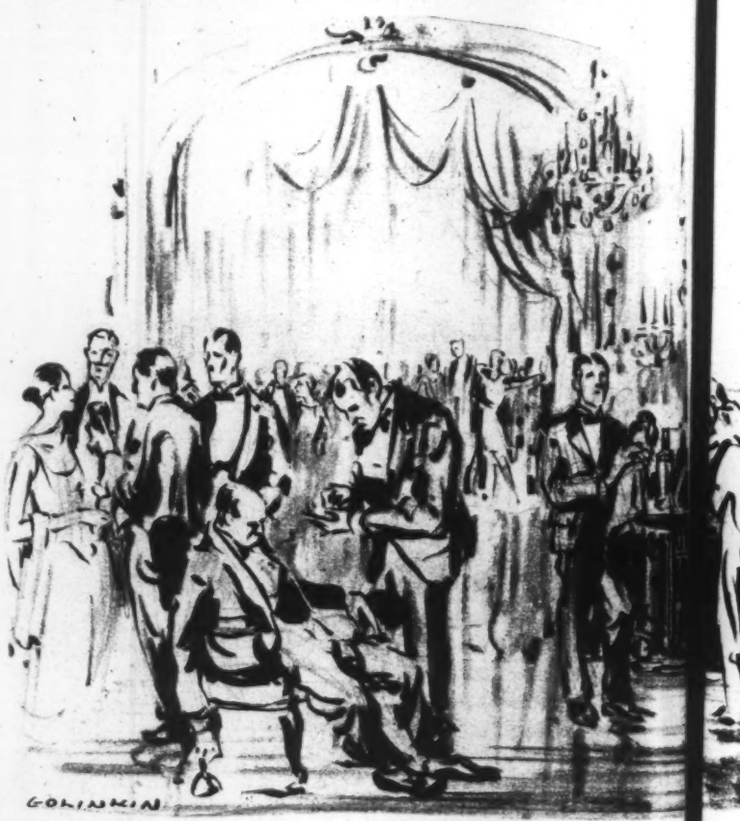
"There's a stateroom below, made up. You'll find brushes and so on there."

She gave him a long, half-veiled look. "All right," she said.

As she reached the companionway he spoke again. "You've forgotten your revolver. And, by the way, your door bolts—on the inside."

"I *hate* you when you laugh at me," flashed Derry, and was gone.

Sunrise slanting through the porthole struck Derry into instant wakefulness. She got up, squeezed into the tiny shower, dressed, and began to poke around in the cubby until she found her requirements. The coffee that she brought up to the helmsman was piping hot. There was even cream! Otley, by some miracle of his own devisement, was trim, fresh and unwearied-looking. She saw that he was newly shaved and guessed that he had had his morning plunge overboard. They were within a mile or so of the sand-cliffed shore. In the foreground rose a rounded rock about which was much troubling of the waters, suggestive of a school of porpoises.



The affair was one about which

"But they're not porpoises at all!" cried Derry as the sloop drew up on them. "They're men."

"From one of the shore clubs," he explained. "They come down late at night, get their sunrise swim, and go up in the morning. I know some of the members. Better keep behind that sail a little more, or they'll see you."

But Derry had no intention of keeping behind anything. "Afraid of my being compromised?" she asked. "Or of my compromising you?" She contemplated with interest the dozen or more sun-browned men splashing about or seated on the rock's smooth flank. "No, my friend," she added, "you can *not* swim as fast as this boat can sail."

This was addressed to a full-faced youth who was making frantic foam in a well-meant essay to intercept their course, though he was too far away to hear her. As the boat slipped away from him he threw up wild arms and incontinently sank; after which evidence of suicidal despair, he reappeared at a surprising distance and paddled sedately to the rock.

Otley put Derry on the earliest train for the city.

"It *has* been a night, Dickie."

"It has," he agreed gravely; a little too gravely, for his solemnity stimulated the lurking spirit of mischief never very far beneath Derry's demurest aspect. "But there may be other—and better—times?"

Derry grinned elfishly. "I just *love* the sea!" she gushed.

The elevator to the roof was fitted with a bar. Bev shook up a "starter" as they ascended.

"IT WON'T do, Derry." Willowdean borrowed a stamp from Derry's desk and affixed it to a letter with a slap. When a woman lifts stamps from another woman without asking, you may know that they have attained the thirty-third degree of intimacy. She gave Derry a searching look.

"What won't do?" Derry knew, but was feeling obstinate.

the Rialto talked for a season.

"You know what I mean. The Dick Otley thing."

"Why won't it?"

"You'd never get enough out of it to make it worth while."

Derry snumphed scornfully. Snumphing is a higher power of sniffing and is very effective when properly performed.

"You talk as if it were a hoss-trade."

"Dick would be a hard trader to beat. I don't know how far things have gone, but——"

"All the way from the Star Cliff Yacht Club to Shoemaker's Inlet. It's a night's trip."

"Are you going to marry him?"

Derry was quite airy about it. "Oh, not necessarily," she said.

"With the accent on the 'necessarily,' I hope."

"Right again. But do you want to bet that it can't be done?"

"Against any one else, I'd snatch it. But you've got the black magic for men up your sleeve. Look what you've done to poor Bev Greenway."

"Bev's been having the spoiled child complex ever since he got back."

"You're not giving him as much of your time as you used to."

Derry laughed. "Haven't got as much to give. The old date book is busting its covers. Besides, too much of Bev isn't the safest thing in the world for me."

Willowdean drummed on the arm of her chair. "Trying Otley as an antidote?"

"Otley's different. I'm not a bit crazy about him, and yet he keeps me guessing. That certainly shows a kind of interest, doesn't it?"

"Are you crazy about Bev, Derry?"

"N-no. But there are times when I think I could be—in a way."

THE other gave a succession of slight, sagacious nods. "I know that way. It isn't good enough."

"He wants me so terribly, Deenie," said she softly. "And he's trying so hard to be awfully decent and straight about it that sometimes I get reckless and think: 'Oh, what's the use!'"

"Self-sacrifice stuff."

Derry flushed lightly. "Not so darn sacrificial, either."

"Maybe you'd better marry Otley after all. He looks to me like money in the bank. In fact, he looks like the bank itself."

"The idea being to sell out for a marriage certificate lest a worst thing befall me. Is that it?"

"If I've got you right," continued the self-appointed analyst, "with all your dare-devil bluff, you've got something deep inside you that is prudent and conservative and piously calculating, which is a pretty good definition of feminine virtue at that. Besides, I suppect you of being sentimental. That's always a safeguard. It's so respectable."

"I'm not sentimental. I'm a hard-boiled business woman—when I'm not having a good time. Speaking of that, when does Marty throw his party—if you don't mind my bursting into verse?"

"Saturday night. By the way, I'm bringing a special guest."

"Walter Blakely, I suppose."

"Oh, no! He's part of the show, anyway. This is some one more in your line of interest."

"You'll have to show me."

"Tony, the bus-top bruiser," announced Willowdean triumphantly. "What price that?"

"Where did you snare him?"

"I didn't have to. He snared himself. Glided noiselessly into the Recherché trying not to look as if he were anxiously searching for something young and innocent in a copper-colored frock."

"No! Did he? When?"

"The night of your nautical escapade with Otley."

"Was he alone? Or together?"

"Intensely alone. He developed such a sad and roving eye that I whistled him over to our table where he sat for two patient and polite hours, heroically resisting the temptation to ask where you were."

"He certainly hasn't broken his neck lately trying to find out."

There was a hint of annoyance in the words which the keen ears of the other did not miss.

"Probably fighting your baneful influence. I think you've got him in a bad way. How you do it to 'em I don't know, Derry. Of course, you're pretty as a bird in a bush; but so am I—not trying to be mean to myself! I started things by asking him for the latest quotation on copper by the yard."

Derry turned a questioning eye of dark suspicion on her friend.

"You weren't low enough to give me away that I'd given him away?"

"Do you think he wouldn't know, after your line of talk on the bus top? I prodded him on that, and he opened up freely and gave me his version of the disgraceful shopping affair. Said it was a purely artistic hunch at first. So, to try him out, I suggested that if he was ever that way again, my coloring went beautifully with chinchilla. And he gave a dying frog's croak that was meant for hardy mirth and said he was cured for life and after this he wouldn't buy a peanut for a monkey in a zoo. Set that to music and dance to it!"

Willowdean jumped up and performed an intricate and sprightly *pas seul* as she chanted:

"He said that he was cured for life. He swore by all that's blue,
That he wouldn't buy a peanut for a monkey in a zoo.

"I guess that makes your little Marty party verse look pretty pallid. So I asked him to the Marty party."

"I don't see the connection."

"Don't you! Womanly pity and all that. He looked so sunk."

"He won't go to the party anyway."

"Any bets? He leaped at it. I may have let it out that you might drop in. That seemed to brighten up his future quite some."

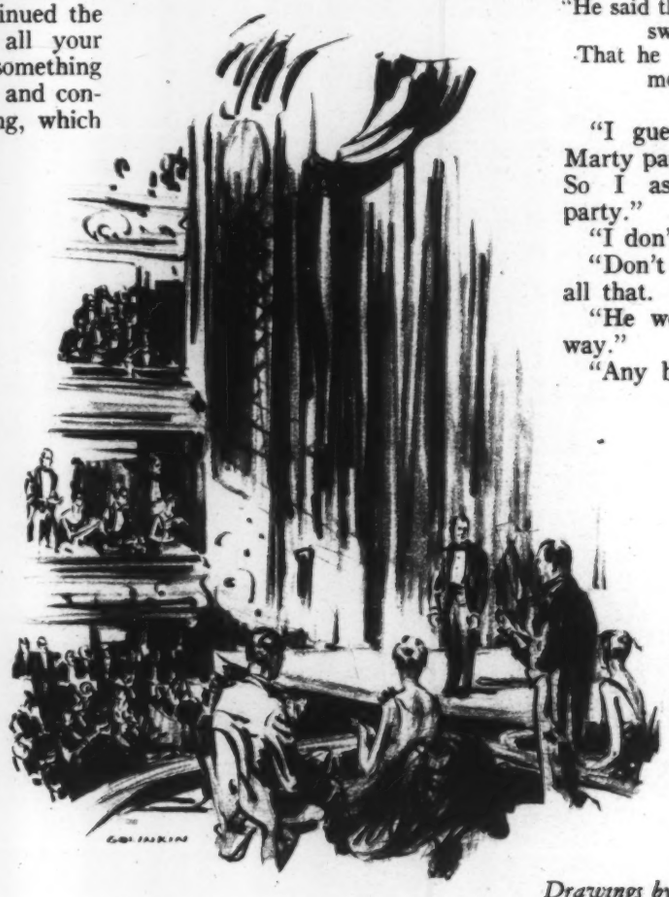
"It doesn't exactly spoil mine," confessed Derry. "Well, if I were Anthony Landor's wife I'd never turn him loose in a great city full of sirens for a whole summer. Neglect is what makes 'em so wild."

Willowdean shot a slantwise look at her companion. There was much that she might have told her, for she had had a long and confidential talk with Landor, who had opened up astonishingly. But Willowdean had the gift of silence, which is fifty per cent of all social strategy. So in a casual manner she observed:

"I doubt whether there's been much to worry about in his case up to now."

"Far be it from me to start a new war in a world that's got enough troubles. Where are you off to now?"

For Willowdean had risen and taken her bag from Derry's desk. As she turned it swung against the corner with a thudding impact which brought from its owner's lips an alarmed exclamation. She opened it and took out a round, shimmery object which she examined with anxious



Drawings by Golinkin

MARTIN COLE'S play, reversing the judgment of the critics, had succeeded brilliantly.

"WITH all your bluff," said Deenie, "you've got something in you that is conservative and calculating—a pretty good definition of feminine virtue."

attention, turning it around in her hands with great care.

"What's that?" demanded Derry.

"One of Walter Blakely's globes," returned the other, with relief in her voice as she set it down.

"What's the funny, wriggly light inside?"

"That's his invention. It's part of the process. If you look at it long enough and get your mind all quiet the light becomes still, and there comes a soft, creeping wave of forgetfulness, of restfulness——"

"Don't! I believe you're trying it on me."

"Oh, no. It's no good unless you give yourself up to it," said the other softly.

"Have you been giving yourself up to it?"

"Yes. Completely."

"Deenie! It's uncanny. It's dangerous. I don't like it."

"It's the most fascinating thing in the world. And it's the only useful thing I've ever done in my life, helping Blackie with his experiments." She spoke with the fervency of the devotee: a strange manifestation for Willowdean French.

"I don't like it," repeated Derry obstinately.

"Blackie thought that he might help your sister in some of her bad depressions. There isn't the slightest danger. Would you be afraid to have him try it?"

"Not if it's quite safe."

"Absolutely, he says, in the hands of an expert." She held up the globe. The light within flickered like a caged sprite. "Why don't you take it home with you?"

"No!" cried Derry. Then she laughed at herself. "Who's afraid? I'll take it and keep it in my room until Blackie can come down. I'll dare it to cast any spell over me."

After the actress had left Derry set the crystal on the desk and studied it. Her face wore a troubled expression.

"I wonder what tales you could tell," she said within herself. "I wonder what you've seen between those two. Willowdean! And Blackie! Of all wildly assorted pairs! It isn't thinkable. And yet——"

She had surprised the dream and the passion in Willowdean's dark eyes and she was afraid for her friend.

CHAPTER XI

MOST contumaciously Martin Cole's play had succeeded. The critics were well agreed that it couldn't; the public reversed their judgment. These regrettable things will happen. Consequently the roof party prospect at his Madison Avenue apartment took on the hue of triumph. Cole refused to enlarge his plans; he preferred to intensify them. The celebration should be one about which the Rialto would talk for a season, with the more interest in that the number of people, who could talk of it with the authority of having been present, was to be small.

Extravagant with the recklessness which radiates from a theatrical knockout, even to those who have only a sentimental interest in it, Derry had ordered a new dress. It was not entirely chance nor, perhaps, wholly artistry that had determined the color. She had good authority for believing that the tint of copper set off her style admirably. Getting into it with the special care due to a mint-fresh creation, she was talking through the partly open door of her bedroom to Beverly Greenway on the divan outside. You could do these things with Bev, confidently. It was one of his assets of character that you could.

"Affer aw," said Derry, "iss your owe faw."

"Swallow that hairpin," [*Continued on page 109*]

Stand By for Roxy!

By S. L. ROTHAFEL

"ROXY, if you were ever young and in love once yourself," started a lavender-tinted letter I received not so very long ago, "please have your barytone sing 'Oh Promise Me' next Wednesday night.

"I'm a young woman, twenty-six years old, and have brown eyes. I'm very much in love with a young man who has been calling on me for five years and who I know cares for me. But he's never proposed. For the past year he's been coming out every Wednesday night and we turn on my radio and enjoy listening to your programs. I happen to know that 'Oh Promise Me' is his favorite song; so if you will have it sung while we're there together maybe he'll propose. I'll see that the lights are low. Please, Roxy. I've done everything but ask him myself—and if this doesn't work, nothing will."

The girls looked at me and said: "Applesauce!"

Well, I was young once myself. And as to whether I was in love—I repeat that I was young once. According to schedule "Promise Me" went on the air in a most melting barytone, and when it was over I faced the microphone and said that if I were a young man listening in with my sweetheart, I didn't see how I could resist proposing to her at such a moment.

As I said, that was on a Wednesday night. On Thursday I received a telegram:

IT WORKED ROXY AM TO BE MARRIED NEXT WEEK THANKS.

THE above story illustrates why I get such a great kick out of reading the letters that come to me from radio fans. They are so human and so real. Some are humorous, some are pathetic—especially those from shut-ins and invalids in hospitals—and some are intensely romantic. The radio seems to invite romance, due, perhaps, to the fact that it appeals to the imagination.

In the summer, young people write and ask to have "Lohengrin" played. Of course you've guessed why. So that they can rehearse the wedding march. In the winter they want songs that go with holly wreaths and open fireplaces. In the fall older people call for music that brings back to them their sentimental memories. And in the spring——

In the spring young men's fancies lightly turn to what the girls have been thinking about all winter. When I read and answer some of these letters I feel as if I were becoming the Beatrice Fairfax of the air.

WHILE on the subject of the kinds of letters that all radio announcers receive, I may say that I've been praised, knocked, reprimanded, guided, and informed.

If I happen to split an infinitive during an announcement—thinking I'm among friends—several college professors take me severely to task. One opera devotee phoned to tell me gently that I have been making a mistake of saying "bravo" to the girls. "Bravo" is said to a man; "brava" is the proper encouragement when applied to a woman. And if I mispronounce a foreign word in stating the title of a French, German, Spanish or Italian song, I am immediately corrected.

Once I happened to remark to one of the singers as we stood in front of the "mike" that he was getting too fat. Letters sent to me to be forwarded to him contained various anti-fat diets and recipes for reducing. They were very valuable. Those were the days when I wished to be among those weighed and found wanting, so I used the diets myself.

And one day I forgot to turn off the control switch. If the announcer has something to say to his artists that he doesn't want overheard on the air, he can deaden the microphone by pressing a button attached to it and then turn it on when he's ready.

Among our singers was a man who always wore spats. One evening he came into the studio quite spatsless, and I said, "Where are your spats? You know you can't sing without them."

I had forgotten to press the button. So for the next few weeks letters came pouring in from all over the country asking me what color spats he wore, why I said he couldn't sing without them, and just why was it that he had stopped wearing them.

I WONDER how many people who listen in know just how long a second can be if you have nothing to say. I've spent hours in one single minute when I've found myself at a loss to know what to say between numbers.

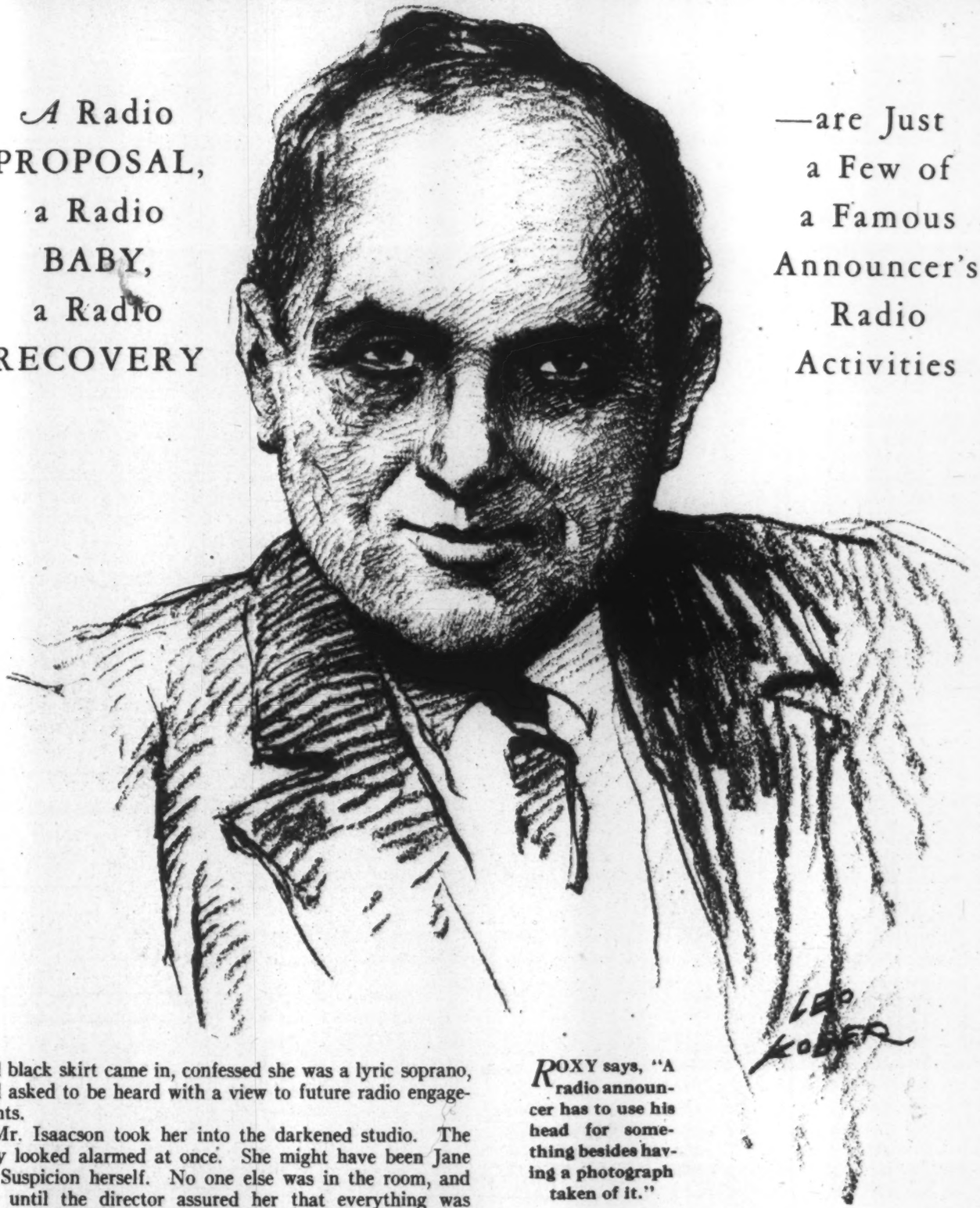
A radio announcer has to use his head for something besides having a photograph taken of it. At moments when a little gap has to be filled to prevent a dead spot on the air, the room, already badly ventilated, becomes hot enough to wilt the flowers on the wall-paper. Once I crawled ignominiously out of such a difficulty by saying, "The mike is still working. I'm still on the air—just thinking of something to say." And the awkward moment was over. But that line isn't good enough to use more than once—if it was much good then. And so far I've restrained myself from reciting "Gunga Din."

I wish I knew how to fix my own set.

MANY people come to the studios asking to recite not only Kipling and the other poets but their own personal poetic effusions. Radio entertainment is still so young that strange notions are held as to its requirements and customs. I happened to be at WRNY one afternoon, talking to the station's genial program director, Charles D. Isaacson. A middle-aged woman, chewing gum, and attired in a straw hat, white shirt-waist,

A Radio PROPOSAL, a Radio BABY, a Radio RECOVERY

—are Just a Few of a Famous Announcer's Radio Activities



ROXY says, "A radio announcer has to use his head for something besides having a photograph taken of it."

and black skirt came in, confessed she was a lyric soprano, and asked to be heard with a view to future radio engagements.

Mr. Isaacson took her into the darkened studio. The lady looked alarmed at once. She might have been Jane N. Suspicion herself. No one else was in the room, and not until the director assured her that everything was quite all right and that if she insisted he would bring some one else in to chaperon her, did she relax her vigilance: She had told him that she wanted to sing over the radio badly. And she did sing badly.

Two weeks later she returned with a man. She introduced him as her accompanist, and when he went to the piano to arrange the music she said to Isaacson defiantly, "And what's more—I'll have you to know he's my husband!" When Charley nodded, rather bewildered, she continued, "My husband doesn't want me to sing over the air. He thinks it cheapens my art—and me. But I tell him that a lady can be a lady anywhere—even over the radio."

I HAD one broadcasting experience of an entirely different sort that I shall never forget. A doctor in Providence, Rhode Island, called me by long distance to say that he had a patient, a six-year-old girl, who was not expected to live for more than a few hours. She was delirious and kept asking for Roxy's gang to play for her, as she had always listened in on us. He asked me if we wouldn't play or sing a little for her to make these last few hours more pleasant.

I immediately checked on his statement, and when I found that the situation was as he had told me, I had the gang sing songs and tell stories directly to the child. The next week her father came to my office to tell me that the child's fever had broken that night and that she had pulled through successfully.

Do you wonder at the thrill I get out of broadcasting—at being on the air—no matter how many times I've done it? Each time I stand before the mike, I get the same electrical enthusiasm- [*Continued on page 116*]

The Even a Main Street Sheik May Outwit a Broadway Salamander

AFTER three years Marcella could deceive even a head waiter.

WHEN she had been in New York a year she changed her name to Marcella and invested her savings, together with the savings of another young woman, in a beauty parlor. She had the man put Maison Marcella in neat gilt letters on the window.

News of this event drifted back to Amboy, Ill., and aroused a great deal of local sympathy for Mr. and Mrs. Rodenbecker who were "poor Margaret's" parents. It was generally remarked that people don't change their name without good reason, particularly to "Maison Marcella." As for the beauty parlor, this enterprise was hailed with broad smiles by the few young men of Amboy who had been to Chicago and bunked for the night in the big Loop hotels.

After three years the mail from Amboy, Ill., began to fall off, and Marcella's enjoyment of her $18 shoes, her jaunty hat and her other Fifth Avenue bargains became, in a manner, undisturbed. In fact by this time Marcella could deceive even a head waiter into the belief that her middle name was Sophistication and that she had been born with a lip stick in her hand.

Young men with linoleum hair escorted Marcella to the theaters and cafés and danced with her. They struggled in various ways—for the clash of the sexes in New York is notoriously pronounced—to obtain her favors. But Marcella was a salamander. It is a simple thing for a young woman to give the predatory male the go-by. But to administer the go-by and still keep this practical gentleman in hot pursuit is an art; an art, however, which could never be understood or believed in Amboy. As a result Marcella's letters answering certain questions that drifted vaguely out of the corn belt were vague and short. It was difficult for Marcella to explain that she had mastered the art of making her clothes look wicked and her eyes look pure, of flirting with her ankles and frowning with her lips, of saying yes with her shoulders and reserving her strategic no's for speech, when necessary.

The predatory males who, in the manner of their kind, had established social contacts with the pretty proprietor of the Maison Marcella in Lexington avenue, referred to her as a "trim little sugar" and Marcella in turn—she adored slang—identified them roguishly as "pretzel dusters."

But there were certain things which Marcella would not do, in the ordinary curriculum of Broadway or even Lexington Avenue. She was not, for instance, above growing serious and telling an escort how glad his mother would be if he sometimes wrot home to her. And she would sometimes grow reminiscent after her second cocktail—she never took more than three—and talk about Amboy. The little streets of Amboy with their little wooden houses and their sun-weathered faces were as moving to Marcella as the "mother song" which sometimes sounded unexpectedly in the cabarets.

Nevertheless Marcella did not allow her innate love of wholesomeness to interfere with her enjoyment of life. A beauty parlor is as good an institution as any in which to learn the well established trade marks of lure. By studying her own coiffure work on others, Marcella learned the language of the hair; and by studying other things she learned, too, that language without which the prettiest women are inarticulate—the way to make a rouge pot promise things and the way to make silk stockings refute the simplicity and aloofness of words.

It was around this time that Amos arrived in New York, and after a great deal of concentrating sauntered into the Maison Marcella. Amos and Marcella had gone to school together in Amboy. Now Amos had come to lay the foundation for a career in the big city, but the first thing he had focused on was finding his old friend Peggy. Amos had a way of doing such things. This was because he treated the city as if it were Amboy. He used to stand on the street corner opposite his Forty-eighth Street boarding house and wait for somebody he knew to pass. They never did, but that did not discourage Amos.

When Amos and Marcella collided in the Maison there was some confusion—chiefly on Marcella's part. Amos was overjoyed. He did everything but slap her on the back and his excitement was wholesome and Amboyish. He sat down in one of the fancy wicker chairs with tidies on the back and "couldn't get over it."

Trouble started almost immediately—just as soon as Amos had finished exclaiming for the hundredth time on the astounding changes which had overtaken his old school chum Peggy. At first the trouble was confined to the cap, suit, shoes and linen that Amos wore. They were as near an approach to the reuben make-up of fame and fiction as the mail order catalogues have left possible. But Amos remedied this. Under Marcella's guidance he bloomed into what he quaintly termed "a city feller."

And then Amos grew personal. This was toward the

Covetous Male

By BEN HECHT

close of his first week. He developed overmastering desires to hold hands in the back of the Maison when the customers "weren't looking." And when they went to the theater he grew adept at steering Marcella into dark by-streets and wanting to be kissed. He was, he said, in love and had always been in love with her since they were both knee high to a grasshopper. Marcella was touched but worried.

Amos, however, overcame her scruples. He showed her his bank balance and painted pictures of the future that were not bad at all. The upshot of it was that behind the crude, insistent language employed by Amos in his wooing, Marcella perceived the little streets and little wooden houses of Amboy—and was touched.

Amos was home folks. Amos was the remembered bright paint of childhood. And Marcella was somewhat tired of her make-up, of the predatory males with whom she played tag through the noisy streets. Amos, she reasoned dreamily, stood for the plain, sweet things of life. He was honest and wholesome. He was different from the gaudy, empty souled rounders of the cabarets.

So Marcella held hands and gave kisses and, alone at night, sighed and quivered happily. And in the Park whither Amos had guided her one silvered evening, Marcella let go altogether and said, "Oh Amos, darling, I'll marry you, I love you."

All this might have turned out all right if it hadn't been for Amos' wife. When Amos failed to return to Amboy after he had looked over the big eastern field long enough for anyone to "make up their mind," she took a train for New York and tracked Amos down and located him in the Maison Marcella. There was a scene in which Amos escaped unscratched but in which Marcella's permanent wave sustained severe dislocations.

Marcella when she returned two days later to her Maison—it required two days for her eyes to clear up from the tears they had spilled on her rooming house pillow—confided her griefs to her partner. She spoke coldly and rather succinctly.

"Can you beat it?" she inquired. "Hanging it on me like that! It makes me sick. And I fell for him, the big rube. I got mushy, I admit. I thought it would be pretty sweet to tie up with a fine, upstanding man like him. Yes, the farmland was calling me again and I felt tired of the slickers. And then, imagine! Married! His wife comes busting in. And she's going to take me to court for luring her husband's affections away. I'll never get over it, Josie, my acting like a rube like that. A downright sucker! But—I knew him when I was a kid in Amboy."

Marcella's lips quivered at this point and she sighed. Then she stood up and regarded herself in the mirror—there were almost too many mirrors in the Maison Marcella—regarded herself and beheld with pride a deftly rouged, perfectly gowned, lithe and alluring person. A Marcella hailed by the predatory ones who had never known her in Amboy as a "trim little sugar." But to herself she seemed something else again—a wide-eyed, little-girl-like moving-picture version of innocence, the child on a cover of sheet-music illustrating the mother song of little streets and wooden houses that grew faint in her soul. She gave Amos a last thought.

"My," she shook her bob sadly, "my, how he's changed."

Amos' wife tracked him down and located him in the Maison Marcella.

The Test —of Love is the Sacrifice

JUST the moment before she saw her husband's figure come swinging up the beach, Armaid Landry's laugh had been low and deprecating, though her eyes shone softly and her cheeks were faintly pink with the excitement of listening to what Bob Allister was saying. Then, as she saw Jules Landry, the laugh was touched with nervousness, the vanishing shine left her eyes curiously troubled, and a swift wash of pallor stole the color from her face. Armaid was new to deceit.

"You will come, won't you?" Allister had pleaded. "It'll be our first chance of a whole day together. A whole day. Just a taste of what it will be like when we're together always. Just you and I. You know I love you better than anything else in this world."

"You shouldn't say that," Armaid had protested. But she said it softly, and when his grasp tightened on her hand she made no attempt to take it away.

Side by side they sat upon the low steps of the front gallery of Jules Landry's house, where the lawn with its twisted, squat live-oaks stretched down to the beach of Grand Isle—the wide, long beach of close-packed white sand that echoed eternally to the beat of the surf of the Gulf of Mexico, surging in with the clean sweep of a thousand miles of open sea against this little outer barrier of the south Louisiana coast.

For days now Allister had been urging this trip with her. A day's ramble in her little cabin cruiser from Grand Isle out across Barataria Pass to the crumbling red brick ruins of Fort Livingston. They were worth an antiquarian's time—those towering, crumbling battlements with their quaint black iron cannon still peering out over the Pass. Though Bob Allister was no antiquarian. He believed in the present day and the fruits thereof, when those fruits could be garnered. And Armaid Landry had filled his eyes as fruit worth garnering from that day early in the summer when he had seen her as he stepped from the battered Bayou boat to the little wharf at Grand Isle.

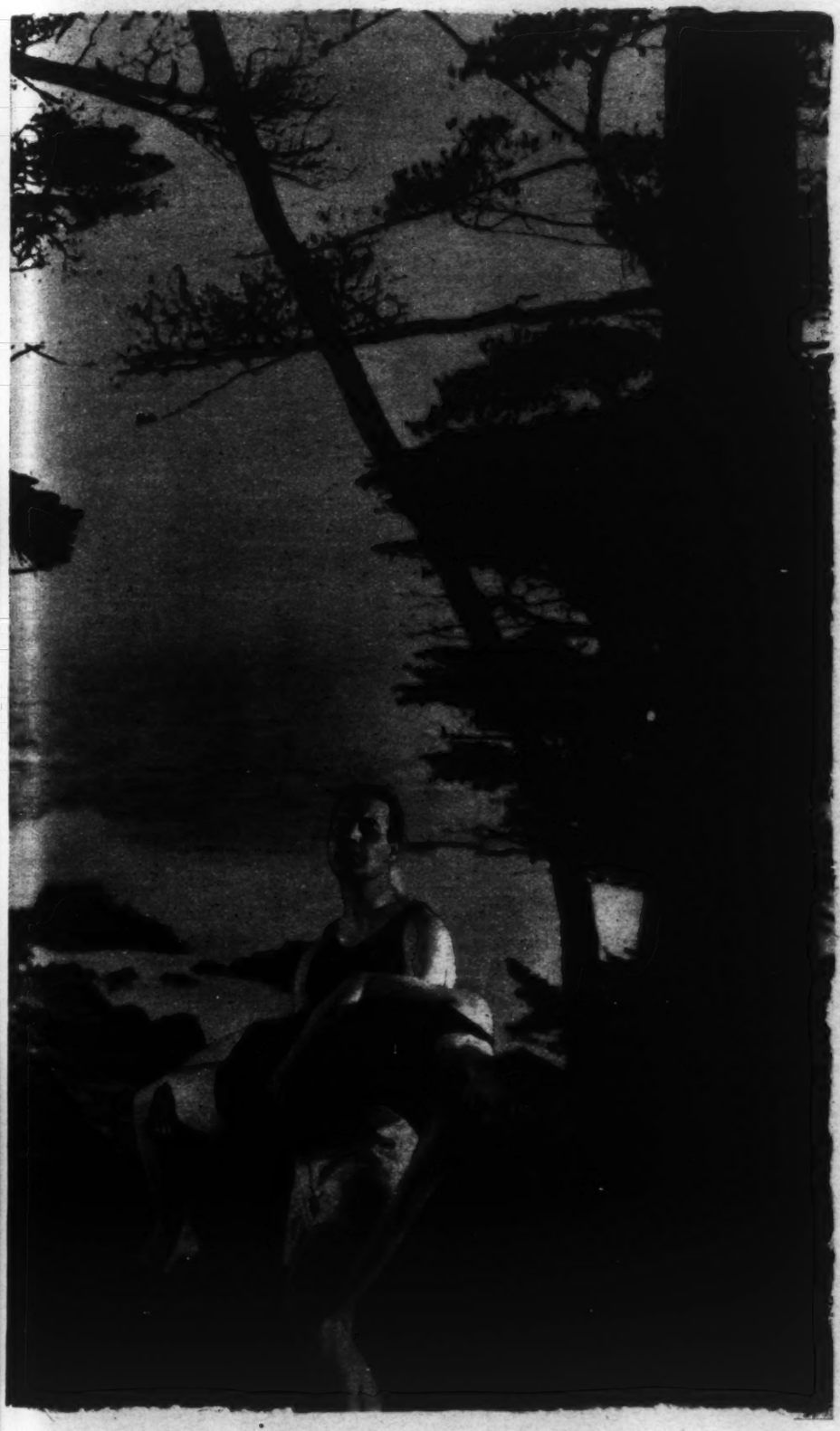
Pursuit of her had lent flavor to the quiet summer that a hectic winter in New Orleans had made necessary. There was added zest in his carefully cultivated friendship with Jules Landry, her husband. A new sort of character, Jules was, to him. Friendly gossip of the Grand Isle folk on the gallery of Boulou Lafont's store had given him the

After a brief rest from his fight across the Pass, Jules picked

We Will Make for It

By

MEIGS O. FROST



up the unconscious body of his wife and started home.

whole story of the strangely mated pair. For they were strangely mated. Armaid's slim beauty shone like a bright flame beside the dark and silent figure of her husband, powerful, athletic in build, sturdy as one of his luggers.

The shy, soft-spoken folk of Grand Isle told him all about them both, once he had been accepted as one of the rare summer boarders who came to Doctor Dufossat's house. How Jules Landry, starting as a boy in a shrimp-seining crew on a battered South Coast lugger, had risen by sheer mastery to power on the coast. How he had become owner of a lugger, of two, of five, of a fleet. How his power now extended over shrimp fleet, oyster fleet, shrimp platforms and packeries, bayou stores where the fur trappers were given credit and where they came with pelts of muskrat and mink and otter.

How he had educated himself that he might better deal with the city's business men who bought his goods.

A great man on the South Coast was Jules Landry, young though he was, they explained to Bob Allister. And when his friend Octave Broussard had died, leaving behind penniless his little daughter Armaid Broussard, it was Jules Landry who sent her at her dying father's request to the ancient Convent of the Ursulines in New Orleans; married her in the little Chapel of Our Lady of the Isle when she returned to Grand Isle, her school days over.

Yes, it had been a zestful summer for Bob Allister, who, anybody in New Orleans could have told you, could not be alone with a woman for five minutes without making love to her. Colorful and ardent love. Love as practised as it was shallow—and very much of both.

It had been a new experience for Armaid Landry. New and frightening at first. Heart-quickening, breath-taking, and exciting, as the game unrolled before her. Nothing the sisters had taught her at the convent had prepared her to meet such a situation as this. She had no confidant; nothing on which to go but her own instinct. Bob Allister was so different—so good to look upon. And he promised so persuasively. The ease and fluency with which he promised might have told much to another woman. It told nothing to Armaid Landry of Grand Isle.

Now as the day of his departure neared she was sure she loved him. In her own heart she knew she was going to give him that day for which he pleaded so eagerly, so thrillingly. She was prepared to give him that day. She too had begun to enter into the spirit of this strange, new, exciting game. It was such a breathless thrill to refuse him, to hear him plead, knowing that she would give in at the end.

And into the midst of this her husband was striding, coming up the beach, turning into the walk, advancing toward the spot where they sat side by side.

Their fingers had disengaged when first she caught sight of him. He could not have seen, she knew. Irritation that was kin to anger stirred in her that Jules should have come just at this moment. She masked it with a gay hail and a smile of greeting. Yes, Armaid was learning to play this new game.

"Back so soon, Jules, *mon bien aimé?*" she called brightly. "I thought you said you were going across the bay to the Bassa-Bassa platform this morning."

"No," said Jules Landry quietly. He always spoke quietly. "That matter arranged itself."

"Can't you join us in our swim?" she asked as Allister gave casual greeting, a pleasant smile on his face. "Bob and I were just getting ready to go down to the beach."

All that summer the two had swum almost daily in the surf. Jules Landry had never joined them. Always, it seemed, he was busy.

"And oh, Jules," she said, as her husband shook his head at the swimming invitation, "Bob is leaving this week, and he has never all this summer gone across to Grand Terre to see the ruins of the old fort. We were thinking of running over tomorrow in my cruiser."

Jules Landry smiled, suddenly and cordially.

"Let's go today," he said. "All three of us. Old Henri over at the Grand Terre lighthouse has sent word twice that he wants to see me about those channel beacons. I had one of my men fill your boat's tank with gas and go over the motor this morning."

Swift impulse to refuse surged up in Armaid Landry. It was throttled by a swifter impulse as she glanced at her husband's face. To all outward seeming the face of Jules Landry still held its cordial smile. But she fancied suddenly she saw a glint in his eyes—a glint she had seen but rarely, turned on other men—never on her. Or was she mistaken? Better take no chance of angering him . . .

"Why, of course we'll be glad to go," she said with sudden decision. "You'll be glad to come along, won't you Bob?"

His disappointment and mounting irritation masked with perfect poker control, Bob Allister gave assent. Inwardly he ground his teeth. Hot thought simmered. The little fool had let him in for it. Maybe she knew best, though. She wanted that day alone with him as much as he did, or he was no judge. Perhaps she was right. Nurse the old grouch along. If their little outing tomorrow was torpedoed a man could delay his departure for a day or two. This was no time to quit.

"Sure," he smiled. "Great day for the trip. Glad to go along. But as you are joining us, Landry, won't you indulge in a swim with us first? We can get back into clothes later."

And so it was arranged.

Refreshed by their dip, they boarded the trim little cruiser half an hour later. Her name, *L'Etoile Etincelante*, gleamed in bright bronze letters on bow and stern.

The Sparkling Star. Jules Landry had named her when he gave her to Armaid in the first few months of their marriage. In choosing that name he soared to heights of sheer poetry for him.

Like a sparkling star Armaid had come into his life.

As he saw her now, climbing aboard with Bob Allister, both of them laughing in companionable understanding, he paused a moment. He wondered if perhaps she had always been like a sparkling star in his life. Worshiped silently in spirit from a great distance. Should he not have bridged more often that cold emptiness between them? For there was a gap, he realized; his ward, entirely dependent upon him while in school, had become his wife, with no opportunity intervening for her to measure her choice of a husband. Well, he had tried to break down the barrier. But he was inarticulate, ineloquent in the face of such things. Others were better than he with words and phrases.

He shrugged his broad shoulders. He, too, climbed aboard. Silently. Jules Landry was always silent, it seemed.

He cast off the mooring rope, spun the motor, grasped the steering wheel, and headed the swift little craft out toward Barataria Pass. Far beyond the bow he could [*Continued on page 123*]

Irritation stirred in Armaid as she caught sight of her husband. She masked it with a gay hail.

The PETTING PARTY

By MORRIS GILBERT

It isn't only a Year
that makes a
Boy of Twenty
into a
Man of Twenty-one

"Hi, Georgy!" he shouted. "You can't tie the Shanahans — it's me!"

GOGO HUMPHREY said farewell with an aching heart to the sun-flecked bosky favors of Paris autumn. He found it difficult to say farewell to Marthe, the handsome lass behind the tobacco-and-stamp counter. It was not entirely easy to say farewell even to Clio, the *bonne* who cared for the suites on the Humphrey's floor. Chiefly it was difficult to bid farewell to Madame de Druc-Amys, but this was accomplished late one afternoon while the rain was kissing the dulcet vistas of the Bois beyond the viney windows.

Next morning Gogo and his mother departed for Cherbourg and the western world, and Mrs. Humphrey had an excellent report to make of her son when she had a chance to discuss him with her husband the night of their arrival in New York.

"A thorough little gentleman, Wilfred," she said. "So improved. So tractable. I was really proud of him. And he has lost his diffidence. Where could the servants have put those downstairs curtains—I can't think."

Mrs. Humphrey expressed herself as much gratified at the docile way Gogo had assumed his share of her social obligations. Nothing could have been more submissive or mannerly than his willingness to escort herself and poor lonely little Madame de Druc-Amys, whose husband was in some pernicious army post in the Sahara, to the Ritz or Claridge's for tea, to the Club de Bagatelle to view the polo, to the Comtesse de Chambon's delightful soirées of a Sunday. And Madame de Druc-Amys—such a pretty little creature—had been so appreciative of the boy! Gogo's French had improved immeasurably.

"He was always a manly child, you know that, Wilfred, and he seemed to develop wonderfully. I am not sure that his enthusiasm for scouting before he went away was a completely good influence for him. It made his movements so very sudden, and his ideas became a little *à côté*, if not frankly gutter. He seemed distraught in Venice, to be sure, and of course he didn't find many boys his own age. But after we left Ouchy and got to Paris he was perfectly content to spend his time with me and my friends, so that really, Wilfred, Gogo and I became *pals*—that's the word, isn't it?—pals . . . splendid pals."

Mr. Humphrey looked up from the paper he had been holding in his lap. He seemed faintly depressed.

GOGO, twenty months away from the social rigor of Manhattan, was doomed. Paris is one thing—and New York another. And because of that obvious fact there was a portentous conference in his father's study somewhat later.

The occasion amply justified the tragedy that veiled Mrs. Humphrey's brow.

"Confounded little rascal!" she shouted. Her cigaret blazed like a torch in the jeweled fingers. "The humiliation! O-o-oh!" She swooned to the window and adjusted the curtain tassel.

"There, Grace, there," said Mr. Humphrey soothingly.

Gogo paced the room, petulant and black. His hands were deep in his pockets, and to tell the truth the tears were close to his eyes. Tears of bewilderment, of injury, of impotence.

What was it all about, Gogo wondered. Somehow, like a lightning bolt he had been put in the wrong. He was crushed under things he did not understand. He felt a sensation he had not encountered in several months—the

terrible incapacity of youth, youth's pitiful inability to meet the moment. He was smothered under inexperience. He might have been twenty again . . . and he was twenty-one!

Twenty-one! A man! . . . So much had happened since he was twenty . . . Gogo began to rally. He looked at his father who seemed even more bewildered than usual.

He didn't dare to look at his mother. That lady champed on her cigaret, and she advanced from the window and seated herself in an inadequate chair. Comfort was not for her in this crisis. Her bosom was agitated.

"Oh! The humiliation!" she reiterates. She wheels on Gogo, and the chair, protestant, creaks. Her hands go forth in exposition toward her spouse. Her speech is the dramatic present.

"Mrs. Fancher asks Gogo to spend two weeks with Bob and Sam at Locust Valley—a most desirable invitation indeed—there's no more distinguished household on Long Island—and after two days she packs him off, bag and baggage, home again!"

"I know, my dear," says Mr. Humphrey amiably.

"Packs him off—with a note to me—very courteous in tone, that I *will* say—but entirely incomprehensible. Gogo himself tells me nothing! Imagine my mortification today at luncheon when I learned the cause—the cause of his dismissal!" Her voice shrilled.

Gogo turned a miserable ear toward his mother. Out it would come, the whole episode, curdled and twisted in the extraordinary crucible of his mother's mind.

"That unspeakable little hussy!" she cried. "That little flaunting riffraff! That brazen——"

"Who, my dear? Not Mrs. Fancher?" inquired Mr. Humphrey mildly. His wife came to a full stop. She cast affronted and rage-extruded eyes at her husband. Then she leaned forward with the spiteful candor of a puma.

"The maid, of course!" she enunciated with malevolent contempt.

"Oh, I didn't know——"

Mrs. Humphrey pawed the air with a shrug, deploring her husband's density. Then with a more sweeping gesture she erased the maid from existence.

"To be sure," she said, "that phase of the matter is adequately dealt with. That young woman departed from the Fancher home not more than half an hour after the exit"—with a bitter motion toward Gogo—"of our worthy son."

Before Gogo's eyes a crackling firecracker jetted, and

THE lights blazed on. Georgiana and Gogo disentangled themselves in a whirlwind of motion, and sat awaiting the thunderbolt.

Drawing by Charles Sarka

Her service was really a lob. It was supreme insolence.

an impact of blood within his arteries jarred him from head to foot.

"No!" he cried. "They didn't discharge her! They couldn't!"

Mrs. Humphrey's laugh was brittle.

"Oh, yes, they did," she retorted mockingly, "not thirty minutes after your graceful retirement."

Gogo choked. He had no words, but a wave of desolation swept over him.

"Such a creature in a respectable home!" his mother exclaimed. "It just shows you the deterioration of morale since that wretched war. One might expect it of some Bolshevik, but after all the dear French have gone through and after all we've done for them—I *do* think they might have better taste than to send such creatures as that French maid over here."

Mr. Humphrey raised a querying forefinger.

"My dear," he interposed. "Please be more explicit. Just who is this young person you're discussing, and what has she to do with—ah—whatever it was that happened?"

"Who is the person?" shouted Mrs. Humphrey. "Why, the maid, of course! I told you. Don't be an imbecile, my dear Wilfred!"

The elder Humphrey was gently expostulatory.

"But pet——"

"Don't call me those scullery names, Wilfred," his wife murmured, merging into a quivering restraint as of *blanc mange*.

"But what has this person, this maid, to do with Gogo?"

The *blanc mange* exploded.

"Everything! Everything to do with him," Mrs. Humphrey peered at her spouse and her eyes took on a level, significant expression. Her eyebrows went up.

"They were —— *carrying on!*" she uttered profoundly. Gogo tried to speak.

"Be silent, sir!" snapped his mother, very *Kaiserlich*.

"They were discovered——"

Gogo sat up suddenly.

"They were discovered traipsing" — the word was ejaculated like poison—"traipsing into the sun-parlor—"

Gogo leaped to his feet, his brows black.

"Who saw us?" he cried.

Mrs. Humphrey sat back, beaming, tight-lipped. The prisoner at the bar had confessed all in open court . . .

"Never mind, my son," she said with acidulous sweetness. She turned triumphantly to Mr. Humphrey. Her voice was solemnly impressive.

"They were discovered traipsing into the sun-parlor, where Gogo——"

Mrs. Humphrey abruptly halted. She was searching for a word and she made groping gestures before her with her fat diamond-scaled hands. The gestures became more vehement as her descriptive powers failed in the face of the vulgar, the low . . .

Gogo went into a sudden black rage. He leaned forward and shouted.

"Why don't you say it!"

"Yes," she cried. "He was actually embracing—kissing a common servant in the sun-parlor!"

Humphrey *père* occasionally cast a mildly speculative orb at his son while his wife's words flowed on. At the end of a quarter of an hour the torrent abated. Gogo, a pebble tossed, found himself lodged below in the silt of the great estuary of defeat. He had agreed to journey to Locust Valley the next day, there on hands and knees to do penance.

"It wasn't Sam or Tommy who told on me," he had cried, anguished at the thought of the defection of either

of the sons of the Fancher household in Locust Valley.

"It was not," Mrs. Humphrey conceded.

"Then it was Georgiana," her son affirmed. Mrs. Humphrey was silent.

"I knew it!" Gogo cried. Mrs. Humphrey marshaled her forces.

"One would expect no less of any such well-bred girl as Georgiana Fancher," she said haughtily.

But Gogo blazed again.

"Oh!" he cried, "the damn little spiteful fool! The little——"

"Gogo! Be silent!" the dowager shrieked, the tempest recurring in force. "Oh!" she suddenly moaned, clutching at the parapet of her bosom with fluttering hands. "Oh—my murmur—I can't stand it!"

The lady swooned heavily forward, elbow on table.

"Wilfred," she breathed faintly "Wilfred—air. It's my heart again—that awful palpitation." Her eyes were glassy, moist. The diamonds sparkled at her breast.

"There, there, Grace," said Mr. Humphrey, busying himself with the window sash. Gogo strode from the room.

"*Blow, blow thou winter wind,*" crooned Mrs. Humphrey. In her voice was the sweet complacency of one who caps a climax with a perfect aphorism.

"*Thou art not half so unkind*—how does the thing go, Wilfred? . . . As—as—Well, it's something about a thankless child, at any rate."

HIS father stood aimlessly by the bed where Gogo tossed, wilted with rage and frustrated pride.

"It does seem hard, Gogo," Mr. Humphrey said. Gogo made no response.

"You—you must learn to understand her," Mr. Humphrey said. His tone was that of an ancient bonze trying patiently to explain some awesome and terrible mystery to a young disciple. Gogo turned petulantly on his side.

The elder man walked over to the bureau and began examining Gogo's military brushes. He was almost inarticulate before this dominant riddle.

"Your mother . . ." he began. And stopped. He tried again. "It isn't as if . . ." he stumbled, and halted. "It's not . . ." he paused again. Then: "You see it's different dealing with a man . . ." His voice was very faint. "Women," he continued, "they're different . . . you've got to humor them." There was a darkness in his tone. "That's all you can do," he said.

He moved to the bed and diffidently sat down on it. One of his hands adjusted timidly the comforter about Gogo's shoulders. Gogo felt a little pang as his father's quiet hand touched momently his neck. There was silence in the room.

"Come, Gogo," Mr. Humphrey said presently in a firmer voice. "Put your clothes on and come down to dinner. You have time; it won't be for half an hour yet."

"No, father, *please* don't ask me!" cried Gogo pitifully.

"Very well," Mr. Humphrey responded with mildness and in rather a hurry. He looked at his son curiously.

"I'll have Mathilde bring you up some food," he said. Gogo did not answer him. Then Mr. Humphrey put forth a timorous query, clearing his throat ere he spoke.

"H'm, h'm—how would you like a pint of Bordeaux with it, Gogo?"

The boy sat up hastily and took a look at his father. The question was unexpected.

"Why, I'd like it very much indeed, sir," he said. Gogo was bewildered . . . This man, to whom he, even in his own mind, was merely a boy, was making a new overture, the overture of one man to another. Gogo's father was treating him like a man! The lad's heart flooded with a new pitiful affection for the meager figure before him, for the old chap who without revealing disloyalty for Mrs. Humphrey yet was seeking wistfully to take the boy's part. Mr. Humphrey hastily went on in some embarrassment, his eyes busy in a far corner of the room.

"I've got some pretty fair stuff left," he babbled with a detached, matter-of-fact air. "I'll get it out and send it along up to you. I've had it"—as one connoisseur to another—"for at least twelve years."

Father and son by this time were equally confused. Mr. Humphrey jumped like a moth-eaten rabbit from the bed and ambled circuitously toward the door. He put his hand on the knob.

"Now cheer up, Gogo," he said without particular conviction.

"All right, father," responded Gogo with a fair grace. Mr. Humphrey opened the door and peered out. Then he projected himself half-way through and looked up and down the hallway. He seemed ill at ease, and lingered. Gogo was just about to ask, "What is it, father?" when that gentleman tiptoed into the room again. He cleared his throat, and Gogo thought he could detect a flush on his father's cheeks.

"This gal—this maid," Mr. Humphrey stammered—there was almost a look of fear on his face—"this gal—was she very pretty?" he gibbered.

Before Gogo could frame an answer, Mr. Humphrey's eyes seemed to leap from his head in embarrassment and terror, and he scuttled hastily out of the room.

"Gogo was discovered in the sun-parlor actually embracing—kissing the French maid!"

GEORGIANA'S service zoomed across the net like a spiteful roman-candle, and pinged up a little dusty powder just inside the extreme corner of the receiving line. Gogo, too proud to stand back far enough to make a fair play at the ball—after all Georgiana was only a girl—thrust out a disconsolate racket in its general direction. To his amazement, the ball struck the racket and sizzled back across the net just as if he had intended to execute a brilliant chop. Gogo noted that

Georgiana was coming up to the net, with that hateful vigor that seemed to characterize her, and sure that his return shot had passed her, giving him the game, he turned away.

Now, he mused, all he had to do was win the next three games in succession for a deuce set, and finally pull out the next two—which would give him the set, seven-five.

Ping! Gogo glanced around, and saw the ball taking its second bounce down by the backstop on his side of the net. Georgiana had made the get and returned the ball to the very spot where Gogo had been standing a second before.

"That's deuce, and the score's five-one," she called from the service line, and threw one of a handful of balls five feet in the air. When it came down she annihilated it, and a streak, like the path of the murder-car in the news photos, projected itself across Gogo's vision.

He walked sedately to the other side of the court.

"Your ad," he cried with outward nonchalance. There was lead, however, on his soul, and it was molten. He clenched the racket and steeled every muscle and nerve in his body—he *must* win the next point. Man was not designed to suffer such abominable humiliation as he would be subjected to if Georgiana—whom he despised for a malevolent, sinewy witchling—won another set. And it was set-point. He waited as a tiger waits for his prey, steel-thewed, fire-eyed.

Georgiana called a cheerful "Ready?" and tossed the ball skyward. Her racket met it, but this time without the crushing force of a Tilden. The service was more of a lob than anything else. It was the supreme insolence. Gogo's heart went out in rage at the arrogance of the gesture, but he remained poised, calm, intent. He would show no mercy on that ball—he would meet it with a murderous, brilliantly-executed Lawford.

The white object floated like a lazy puff ball to the dirt in front of him. Gogo took his time—no hurry would mar the return. With the ridiculous air of a slow movie the ball rose and began to settle. Let it get right close to the ground. Don't forget to keep your eye on it and to hold your racket tight . . . Now . . . Whang! Gogo's stroke took its victim unaware, and it darted like a swallow over the net and sailed, ten feet in air, into the backstop.

There was a sob in Gogo's throat and he just restrained himself from throwing his racket in the air—that most ignominious of all tennis gestures. He had won only four games in three sets! But yet—

"How about another set," he called as casually as might be, though his voice sounded dry and tinny in his ears.

"We haven't time," responded Georgiana from the side line where she was loosening the net. "We haven't even time for a shower if we're going to meet your mother."

On the way to the station—Georgiana drove like a frenzied valkyr—Gogo slouched in the far corner of the seat and mused on his sorrows. He was having the worst time of his life, and now that his mother was on her way to Locust Valley, he was bunkered. He had to stay. Georgiana, a slim, wiry Atalanta with shoulders as firm and beautiful as polished marble, seemed to him to take malevolent joy in humiliating him. On the tennis court, at golf, and on the back of a horse she remorselessly displayed her superior prowess, and Gogo restrained her from further exhibitions in the water only by insisting that it was too cold to swim.

She swung the car into the plaza before the station as if it were a loose comet, and backed at twenty miles an hour into a space so tiny that when the car came to a standstill you couldn't have slipped a paper knife between it and the adjacent automobiles. They had five minutes to wait.

"How come no pep, big boy?" demanded Miss Georgiana Fancher, after a considerable pause. That was another habit of Georgiana's that Gogo hated — an inveterate slanginess. He mumbled something inarticulate, too sulky to respond further.

"Says which?" Georgiana inquired after the mode of a Nubian stable boy. Gogo sat up straight, very nettled.

"I said I have plenty of pep," he replied distinctly.

"Wow!—you *have* got the heebie-jeebies," said Georgiana with elegance. "Here comes the rattler."

The train drew in. Mrs. Humphrey did not descend.

"She'll be on the next train," said Georgiana, "forty-eight minutes from now. Let's take a ride."

The car lurched with madness around the plaza and pitched away on a road that soon was vacant. For ten minutes they sped through the darkling October twilight among fields lavender with cabbages and russet with cornstalks. At the top of an upgrade an avenue of locust trees took them. Georgiana braked the car, threw out the clutch, and steered off the road, stopping. Gogo didn't quite understand this, but he made no comment.

"Spretty, isn't it?" Georgiana ventured—a little timidly as Gogo thought. It was pretty. It was the breathing time of day.

Gogo assented, and Georgiana swayed a little toward him so that their shoulders met with a momentary pressure.

"Excuse me," said Gogo, moving abruptly away.

"Oh, don't mention it," she answered in a pseudo-formal tone that was intended to be humorous. They had nothing more to say for a time. Then Georgiana pointed to the southwestern sky.

"Lookit," she said. Gogo looked and saw a sickle moon.

"Spretty, isn't it?" she said.

Gogo hated to admit that the moon was pretty, but he did, after an ungracious pause.

The sound of a motor grew behind them, and an automobile ducked past. One of several men in it whistled insinuatingly at Gogo and the girl. She laughed.

"They think there's going to be some petting," she ventured.

Gogo's gorge rose at the vulgarity of the expression.

"Some *what?*" he inquired in the nastiest way possible. When he looked at Georgiana he was astonished to see a diffident embarrassed expression on her countenance.

"Some petting," she repeated with a giggle. "You know."

If Gogo knew he gave no indication of it. But suddenly a light was turned on in his mind. The girl was trying to make love to him! He looked at her swiftly with a new and different interest.

After all, she was a girl, not an animate pest. Stunning, in her way too, with her bob [*Continued on page 96*]

Vaudeville Afloat!

Up and down the Ohio all summer long the "show boats" ply. They stop at the little river towns, flags flying, bands playing; and the whole countryside streams across the gangplank of a summer's evening. Old folk, young folk, mothers with babies pack the seats as full as a first night on Broadway.

Read in next month's McCLURE'S AND RUTH SAID—*the story of a Broadway dancer who buried herself on an old show boat for the reasons only a woman could have.*

By Mary Louise Aswalt

The Nanina House

By NATHALIE SEDGWICK COLBY

As she opened the earth for her little house with his pocket knife, she felt as if she were releasing a strength that ran out to herself and Carlo.

NANINA sat beside Carlo, her husband, on the iron bed of her whitewashed room in the Goldman apartment. Her room—the servant's—was among the tiniest partitions of the apartment, excepting always Mr. Goldman's. The alcove of Mr. Goldman opened out of his wife's room, where it might almost be mistaken for a closet. Except for his alcove and Nanina's room and the kitchen, the place was mostly pink with flashes of gilt everywhere, and when the windows were shut it smelt faintly of musk and Russian tobacco.

Nanina had been only twelve hours in the Goldmans' service, and already the time had come to say good-bye to Carlo, whom she had never left one single night since he had taken off his poilu uniform after the war. Sturdy of body, she sagged against his slender shoulder now, comforted by the clean bone and muscle supporting her.

"Courage, courage," his voice came to her. For answer, Nanina screwed up the slit of her mouth at him into a smile all contrivance.

That was what Carlo had kept saying to her while they were crossing the ocean in the belly of the big ship—"Courage"; and Nanina had smiled back at him her seasick smile with lips that laughed and cried at the same moment. The word and the smile together knit a strength

WHEN Her Own HOME is Built of LOVE, a Woman is Nature's Guardian of Any Home that is Menaced by Passion

greater than the strength of either of them alone. And Carlo needed strength to help him scoop deep into this city of New York, which spread its granite surface before him without a crack anywhere to thrust his hands into. Out of this indifferent city had to come money somehow to make a home for Nanina.

"The madam says you can come Tuesdays—Tuesdays and Fridays from eight to ten . . . *Adieu*—good-bye."

Hiding her eyes under her black sleeve, Nanina took care not to wet the muslin cuff.

Carlo hated the liveried look of Nanina's cuffed alpaca dress. It shut away from him the plump, bare arm he liked to see. It meant that she belonged to some one else. Nanina, his woman, was a hired woman now! At the thought he pulled her jealously against him. The smell of dye rose in his face from the dampened alpaca. Staccato sobs went through her body. She recalled her humiliation yesterday at the employment agency; recalled the brassy impact of Ruby Goldman's voice.

"Eighty dollars? Well, if she can cook and wash . . . She learned English from nursing the soldiers, you say? . . . I guess I have to pay it . . . You have *positively* nothing cheaper?"

As Carlo held her close to him the hopeful spirit of those who have been ancestrally close to the soil rose in him. Their faith was in his bones. If one dug hard enough, deep enough—if one didn't spare one's strength . . . He put his head down in her black hair.

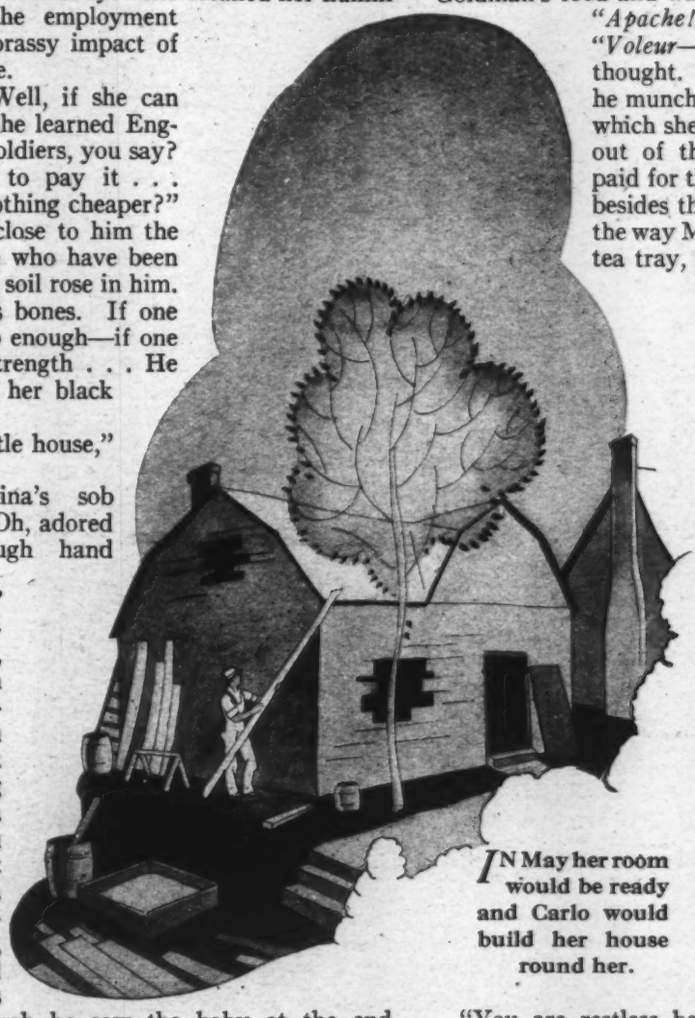
"I'll build you a little house," he said solemnly.

"A house?" Nanina's sob broke into a laugh. "Oh, adored imbecile!" Her rough hand stroked his hair.

"Ecoutez — listen." Carlo spoke to her sternly. He held her away, watching her face in its effort to smile. "Before a year I build you a house." He shook her gently, accenting his words. "A Nanina house. Where you work for *us*. Eight rooms and a bath, a garden . . . and a Nanina baby." He spoke, looking down the mild path of her eyes, his face softening as though he saw the baby at the end.

"Petit fou—little idiot!" she said tenderly, after he had gone, pinning a frilled cap like a snow patch on her black hair. *"Petit fou!"* But though her lips curved, deep down in her heart she believed in the little house. She had seen it in Carlo's eyes. From that moment she saw it always, waiting for her and Carlo. Saw it across the heads of Ruby, Mr. Goldman—and Reggie. She took the picture of the little house to bed with her, and she fell asleep within the shelter of its white walls.

Sometimes Nanina visualized Mr. Goldman in her house



IN May her room would be ready and Carlo would build her house round her.

—Mr. Goldman with his head like a billiard ball. Never would she forget how he had patted her head on that first day when she had cried for Carlo. His voice had patted her too. The voice and the hand together had taken away the strange cold feeling in her heart.

"Good old Gogo," Nanina said to herself tenderly as she thought of little Mr. Goldman. It hurt her to see the avid way his eyes followed his young wife about. Wounded soldiers in the hospitals had looked just that way at a cup of cold water.

"Nanina!" All day long her own name buzzed at her like a hornet through Mrs. Goldman's red lips. "Put the tea here." Mrs. Goldman's fingers, polished to a finish, flickered among the teacups which stood between herself and the sprawling feet of Reggie Meacham.

Nanina despised the young man who ate so much of Mr. Goldman's food and whose legs dangled about so casually. *"Apache!"* she called him under her breath. *"Voleur*—robber." He was pure waste, she thought. Besides the chocolate cake which he munched like a pig, and the dance tickets which she was sure Ruby Goldman squeezed out of the housekeeping money—he never paid for them, not he, with his frayed cuffs—besides these things, Nanina blamed him for the way Mrs. Goldman looked at him over the tea tray, her eyes turning from topaz stones to liquid pools spilling out misguided tenderness. Those glances were to be reckoned against Mr. Meacham, for they were the master's loss in a deeper way.

"Nanina! More toast, Nanina."

When they finished their tea it was poetry time, Nanina knew from experience. She watched Mrs. Goldman, leaning against the mantelpiece. Underneath the swaddling line of the belt of her yellow gown, her figure made itself felt. Her hair was smoothed so flat it might have been painted in henna brush strokes against her skull. It was like a tongue of flame crowning her small figure. Her nails sparkled like diamonds around her cigaret holder. Reggie sprawled on the floor at her feet. His skeleton-shaped hands pushed back the lock of black hair which smeared over his forehead.

"Why am I so restless, so terribly restless?" Ruby Goldman asked him through the smoke.

"You are restless because life is calling you," Reggie answered, settling himself comfortably against the fireplace.

At the door, Nanina heard him reading in a deep murmurous voice, "With winged mountains on my feet . . ." She repeated the words to herself, translating them into French in the kitchen. He was quite mad, she thought. It was one of his own poems he was reading; she knew it because every morning she dusted the blue book with Reginald Meacham's name in gold on the cover. "Seraphs and Drainpipes" was the title. It made her sick even to

pass her dust rag over the thing. Yes, he was mad, but the trouble was his madness had touched Ruby Goldman. She looked at him with the same greedy look which naughty children turn to colored candy in the shop windows, crying for the bad stuff rather than being happy with good bread and butter. Nanina knew the Reggie type. In summer Paris spilled them as residue into quiet country lanes. If the master were Carlo he wouldn't stand Reggie. Carlo would never let a man like Reggie come into his front door. With his builder's fingers, Carlo would crack him as if he were a brittle chicken bone.

"Vieux Gogo—good old Gogo," Nanina said to herself one evening in early October, passing a plate of soup around Mr. Goldman's bald head which caught the light of the dining-room chandelier. Nanina could see that Ruby's eyes, going over him in unabashed appraisal, made him terribly uncomfortable. He showed his embarrassment by the apologetic way in which he tucked his napkin over his round stomach.

"Ain't you goin' to eat, dearie?" Mr. Goldman spoke tentatively, drawing in his soup between the words with a purring noise. Mrs. Goldman's fingers glinted softly over the spare outline of her shoulders, tapping the flesh nervously with pointed nails.

"Some one has to keep their figure," she answered sharply. It was as if her voice, following her eyes, etched out derisively the bulbous front of her husband's figure.

Mr. Goldman spooned down Nanina's garlic-flavored soup, but he kept a palliating eye on Ruby.

"Business looks good today." He smiled timidly at his wife. He might have been passing possible dollars and cents stealthily under the table, bargaining for her approval to be handed back above the white cloth.

"I wish people didn't know you kept corset stores," Ruby rasped fretfully.

"But, Rube dear, our corsets are an improvement on nature." The phrase slid from Mr. Goldman's lips, oiled by custom, and he moved his hands automatically as if outlining behind a counter the imaginary abundance of a figure. Across his unyielding back, Nanina saw Ruby press a cobweb handkerchief to her eyes, as if to shut his salesman's gestures from her sight.

"No one wears corsets any more," she said, carefully jabbing his sensitive spot. Nanina saw his pathetic round face flinch. "Cora and Sadie wouldn't be seen tangoing in them, and Reggie Meacham says they're just dreadful . . . He says they would have just ruined Greek art."

Reggie's name brought a bewildered silence upon Mr. Goldman. Even Nanina could understand that Reggie's opinions on Greek art confused her master. Mr. Goldman knew exactly where he stood, measured by the standards of the corset business, but Reggie Meacham's yardstick was a different thing. Wielded by Ruby's small fingers, he might be found wanting in the most unexpected places.

Later, when Nanina brought in the coffee, Ruby Goldman was smiling. She was telling her husband about a topaz necklace she wanted. "It will be a necklace of shining eyes," she said to him, drawling the words out like Reggie Meacham. Nanina could see that Mr. Goldman was happy, stretching the topic of the topaz necklace in order to keep alive the bright gleam of Ruby's mouth.

"Good old Gogo," Nanina said tenderly that night, thinking of herself as drawing him through the green door of the house Carlo would build for her, which was so real inside her head. She couldn't decide in her mind about Ruby. She wanted to leave her outside, only she knew that Mr. Goldman wouldn't be content without her. She went unhappily to sleep with Ruby sitting out on the cold piazza, and Mr. Goldman rocking wistfully inside in front of her fire.

To her delight the figures coming up the road were Ruby and Mr. Goldman.

The dream house was so real to Nanina that she almost cried when on a Sunday afternoon in early November she stood with Carlo facing the lot he had bought for her. It was blank as a missing tooth in the row of biting white houses near the Palisades across the river. There was nothing on it but a bare tree spreading its lean tracery against the cold gray dome of the autumn sky.

The deed for the land crackled safely in Nanina's stocking. Over and over Carlo had explained to her how he had paid two hundred dollars down. Two hundred dollars—which was twenty days at his job of bricklaying—for the damp brown soil. How he had borrowed for the timber for the house by mortgaging the land.

He drew the figures for her on rough grocery bags in Mr. Goldman's kitchen. They grew like the house that Jack built, cobwebbing over the coarse paper.

"You haven't even got a shovel to work with," said Nanina now, as she looked across the stretch of bare mud.

Carlo's fingers ferreted deep in his pocket. "Break the earth with this," he answered, unsheathing a long blade from a bone handle. Nanina knelt down in the dirt, her

"You took the money!" he spat at her. "Yes, I saved it from you—vile Apache." And there was a deep, triumphant timbre in her words.

knees sinking into the soft surface. As she opened the brown earth deep with her knife, she felt as if she were releasing a strength that ran out to herself and Carlo. She stooped down and her lips touched the living dampness of her home.

As she knelt, the cold blue sky deepened to purple. The houses that shut in the empty square on either side lit up like jack-o'-lanterns behind white curtains. The smell of smoke curling out of the chimneys mixed with the rotting autumn leaves, mellowing the crisp evening air. In one of the houses a pianola jazzed, velveted by the closed windows. Nanina and Carlo stood together in the bleak evening light. As she lifted her face up to him, a loamy smell came from the lips which met his in teeming silence. In their kiss was the silent reverberation of the future.

After the visit to the Palisades Nanina became two persons. One of them slept in a warm bed, ate three good meals a day, working for Mr. Goldman in a frilled muslin apron and watching the Ruby and Reggie drama developing like a dreadful plot. The other Nanina lived in spirit on the Palisades with Carlo; lived with Carlo in his ragged and moldy clothes, often hungry and cold but filled with the buoyant inspiration of his work. Watching Carlo struggling with his tired flesh to put a defense around her, she found the house becoming the symbol of his love for her. At night she no longer looked out from the windows of a dream house, but from the house of Carlo's love, and from those windows she saw things more clearly than before, looked more deeply into Mr. Goldman, felt sorry for Ruby. Only for Reggie she never felt sorry. He was a menace to houses.

"I hate him," she said to herself, pretending that he was the leg of lamb she pounded with a potato-masher, cutting him cruelly to pieces with her small vegetable knife. And then, delicately shaping pastry, she would think of Mr. Goldman. *"Vieux Gogo."* She patted him into little velvet heart shapes, fluting him carefully.

Just a little after Christmas Nanina noticed especially the shopworn look about Mr. Goldman. His tired face was fretted with lines; his work had put ravines between his brows. It was something to make one cry, Nanina thought, and she saw, as any one could see, that the fingers of Ruby marked deep into him as if he were putty.

"Business is bad," he said to Nanina, his boots hitting the blue linoleum squares, as he rocked up and down in the kitchen. When Ruby was out dancing, he liked to sit with Nanina. There was a peace about her silence that comforted him.

"I used to sit in the kitchen with Ma." His sentences came out in broken intervals. "There were eight of us. Ma and I used to plan how to raise them, sitting up nights."

Nanina nodded at him, her [*Continued on page 105*]

"Husband and wife have one perpetual meeting place—their child."

When 30 Repents the Love

By Mrs. M.

Dear Dissatisfied Wife:

Women unhappy in marriage divide into two main groups—those who suffer in their hearts and those who suffer in their minds. You are in the second and, I think, less unfortunate class. For almost any loving woman, the pain of frustrated ambition must be a thrust less shrewd than such direct blows at the affections as unfaithfulness or brutality. Also, when irritation is mental it is easier to apply a mental counter-irritant. Please do not think me lacking in sympathy for your problem; I want only to cheer you at the start by reminding you that it might be harder to solve.

What you have to do is to apply your mind to it. Your letter shows that you possess an intelligent and forceful mind—although in one most important crisis of your life, you didn't use it! My dear, whatever possessed a sensible young woman like yourself to marry a man whom you had known only three weeks! No girl can tell whether congeniality, as well as the thrill of physical attraction, exists between herself and the man who has been in her life such a brief space of time.

You are paying now "for an impulsive decision made at twenty-three," but your bill might have been much heavier. There was the little girl in my home town who just as impulsively became the wife of an attractive stranger—to find, after he had departed with her parents' savings, that he was a bigamist.

Not the least value of the good jobs which you and other girls have held these last few years is that you can take time really to become acquainted with your lovers, to "summer and winter" them. You need not marry hastily to attain economic independence, or to escape into freedom from your father's house. You need not—personally, I think a girl should not—marry at all, unless you find a man whose mind goes along with yours, to use the late President Wilson's description of the compatibility he expected from his cabinet officers.

My "you" is, of course, generic; you personally are excluded because you did what I have taken a paragraph to warn other girls not to do—you married in haste. But there ought to be a period to your repentance. Here's hoping I can help you set it.

Your difficulties are two: material and psychological. Let's take them one at a time.

You worry because your husband is not getting ahead—although in the seven years [*Continued on page 80*]

By the Love

TWO authorities in sociological common sense—a woman and a man of standing in their professions—have been commissioned by McClure's to study each month a single problem selected from those submitted by readers. These experts are unknown to each other, so that the woman's side of the question may be contrasted impartially with the man's. As evidence of good faith, all letters sent to McClure's, 119 West 40th Street, New York, must bear the writer's name and address. Under no circumstances, however, will names be disclosed, even to the two principals.

My dear Love Doctors:

I am worried to death about my own life, and I wonder if you could help me. I am thirty, married seven years, and have one little girl, a perfectly beautiful baby of five. Before I was married I worked as a stenographer, having followed high school with a business course, then went on to library work, and was finally given the highest position in our library, at a salary of $1500 a year. All work interests me, and even now I miss going to business every day.

My husband and I met when he came to help the engineers and electricians build the big dam. He was new to our town, and a big, kind man who seemed to me to be silent from intellect, not from sheer lack of anything to say. I discovered my mistake about that later. He never made love to me, especially; we just naturally paired off. After three weeks of "courting" he went away, only returning to town the night before we were married.

We came here, and settled down among strangers. I soon made friends, enjoying my new life and my little house, and after awhile my baby. But Bert has gone steadily downhill—or perhaps he never came up, really. His income was $2400 when we married, and although

"Yours is the problem of most professional women who marry."

Marriage Made at 23

Doctors

it is $3600 now he is not doing nearly as important work as was first entrusted to him. He will not make an effort, sleeps late every morning, has no ambition or interest in his work, and is out of favor with all the "higher ups" at the switch station. Young boys work under him a few months and then move up above him, but he doesn't care—he says his wife and baby are all he wants and that as long as he can feed them he'll be content.

My friends and interests have been growing steadily away from him, although, good-natured and lazy and shiftless as he is, I don't dislike him, and neither does anybody else. My mother lives with us, and Bert is always nice to her. She is delicate and has no means, but we four are harmonious and our household is happy.

All my life I have hungered for "niceness", cultured friends, books, development of my own potential qualities of soul and mind. It is bitterly hard for me to be so needlessly poor, to work so hard at dishes and dusting, and to see the beauty and pleasure of life go to younger women without half my capability. Naturally I don't grow daintier and fresher and younger in this shabby little house that has not been painted since I came here a bride, and naturally I wonder about little Jean's chances. Sometimes the piano is not touched for weeks, and it is four years since I have had any sort of outing.

Bert's work hours are 1 to 9 P. M., mother and I waiting for the late dinner. But even on Tuesdays, his holidays, he won't have company, play cards, or take me to a show. He will dig about the vegetable bed with Jean, or read the *Scientific American*, with his shoes off, and his pipe lighted, as happy as a King. Once, in anger, I threatened to leave him and get back my old position, but he answered he never would give up Jean. And there is mother; I have to think of a home for her.

Nothing will make him talk, and dress, and act, and groom like a gentleman. He says he is a master electrician and never pretended to be anything else. And I go on washing, cleaning, cooking, and wondering how many other women have to pay during the thirties and forties and fifties for the impulsive decision made at twenty-three.

E. A. D.

By Mr. H.

My dear Madam:

I can't help liking your husband, although I do see how unsatisfactory he is in some of his ways—and doubtless will continue to be. I don't wonder that you are restless and worried. But let me tell you something:

Yours is the new problem of this age. It confronts almost every professional woman who becomes a wife. Like the doughboys in the World War, you have tasted the thrill of adventure—not in the fields of Flanders, but in a modern working existence, where you have had daily contacts with bright minds, pitted your wits and personality against others, and have come out victor. For, as you say, "I was finally given the highest position in our library at a salary of $1500 a year."

You must have been in your early twenties then—and earning a man's salary! No wonder that washing, cooking, and dusting means to you the same let-down that our doughboys encountered when they left France to return to the daily grind of office and factory.

But this doesn't mean that our doughboys could have endured with contentment a lifetime of war, nor that the bachelor girl with her own latchkey and spending money, pretty clothes and good entertainment, doesn't lie awake nights and give way to heartaches and tears. Our independent working women put up a proud front, bless their brave hearts, but they also reach depths of loneliness, doubt, and weariness of life, of which the woman with a loving husband and children knows nothing. That's where you are the victor—and you must never forget it.

Recently a friend of mine wrote a personal confession in a magazine, and I happen to know that every word she said was the exact truth. She is a very successful writer who earns enough money to live in any part of the world she chooses, and does so; the best society has to give is hers. In short, she leads the sort of life full of "niceness and culture" which you want for yourself. Like you, she was married to an unambitious man of mediocre ability, who was content to remain just that. But since *she* wasn't, she left him. Well, she had talent and courage and energy, and she finally reached the pinnacle of her hopes. But now, as she confesses, she is *so* lonely living up there alone. It has taken her so long to reach the heights of success that she feels too old to have children, even if she could discover the man she would be willing to marry. She confesses that she made a mistake in giving up a good enough husband and the possibility of darling

children, for all children are darlings to their mothers, for her present lonely and empty fame. This is what she says at the end of her frank confession of failure:

"With my rapacious hunger for beauty and self-expression I know I should have found some outlet for it even if I had a family of six and had to do all the housework myself. Now that it is too late I can see that to work out one's personal salvation through home and children holds the greatest compensation of all."

Your own zest for life, your ambition to get on, are like hers. The circumstances of your marriage are almost identical with hers.

The test of character lies in the ability to adjust oneself to the circumstances of one's life, and to do it gracefully. There is a positive greatness in the fire of soul that can outwit the ugliness of a mediocre existence. There are more ways for you to apply the capacity you know you have than simply to attempt to go back to your old life; especially when doing so means parting with a husband who—after all—is kind and good, possible separation from your child, and the breaking up of your home.

I feel that when it came to the actual point of break you could not do it. Then what are you to do? To find a way out is not easy, but it certainly is not impossible. The country is full of women who, instead of wasting their time and emotions feeling sorry for themselves, have made a virtue out of their necessity.

I know one woman who is considered one of the leading dieticians of the country. Her books on the feeding of children are read by thousands, and she is paid the amount of a man's salary for a whole month—for one hour's lecture!

And how did this come about? She had a child who either was born with, or acquired in infancy, digestive disorders that seemed incurable. The mother gave up years of her life to the study of food values until she cured her child. Incidentally, she created for herself a lucrative profession.

This sounds very grand, you say, but I couldn't do anything like that. I don't say you could. But there is bound to be something. The life of today teems with opportunities. The point to remember is that while the opportunity is always to be found you must not expect to hit upon it all at once. To build one's life takes time.

And this brings me to an aspect of your letter which I have had in mind all along. Your attitude toward your husband. If you are going to place your existence upon a happier basis, the first thing to do is to consider him.

There is an element of freedom and rugged dignity in the disposition of a man who refuses to play cards, but prefers to work in the garden or "play with little Jean." Your husband might still love to do that even if he had ten times his present income, and if you think you have cause to complain on that score, swap confidences with the women whose husbands take to night life, or insist on playing poker at least three times a week until the small hours, or leave their wives every Sunday and holiday to enjoy themselves on a golf course.

Your husband strikes me as a real fellow, even if he does like to amuse himself in his own way. I have a lot of sympathy with him, because my own wife likes to give tea parties and have a lot of chatter about the house, which interferes with my peace and comfort and habit of wearing old clothes at home. But we manage to get along without friction. I keep to my own quarters when my wife's hen parties are filling the living room with cheerful noise, or, like your husband, I work doggedly in the garden. And my wife refuses to make excuses or apologies for me. She does not permit me to "cramp her style," and so she goes on merrily giving parties; neither does she impose her gregariousness upon me. Many a time a guest has come out and helped me weed—and that's where I win out!

I know you are limited by your husband's characteristics. It is disheartening to be married to a man without ambition. I believe in my heart that the wives of such men have every reason and right to make demands on them. Some men need to be constantly aroused to make an effort. And there you have my deep sympathy. But if you were to go out and earn money for the household, your husband would probably make even less effort than he does now. He might lie down entirely. Realizing these things must make you very angry with him at times. Yet you must always remember that to nag him will only result in spoiling your home life. Try good-humoredly to arouse him to effort by making such demands upon him as are legitimate. And do not expect too much. Yours is the white woman's burden, and none of us is without burdens. We often grow the finer and the better for them.

I do earnestly urge you by all means to keep true to the fine integrity of your own character and ideals. Be graceful in the circumstances of your existence. Keep up with your friends, certainly. Invite them to your house and go to their homes whenever it is possible and pleasant to go—alone, if your husband won't go with you. Rearrange your schedule of household duties and insist on getting an hour at the piano every day. Interest yourself in your child's musical education. Soon your little girl will occupy more of your life and interests, and you will be fascinated by her problems and the excitement of helping to solve them. Court your talents and keep them alive; there are books in the library that will give you more intellectual stimulus than any card party. Groom yourself and look your best, for the very reason that your husband is careless of his appearance. It will sink in, eventually, as a hint to him. If it doesn't, do it for your own sake, and you will find compensations and realize that you are much happier than ever you were before.

I am sure that if you take hold of yourself in some such fashion, and stop worrying or dreaming about some radical step which might disrupt your marriage, you will regain your old sense of the joy and adventure of living.

And then may come to you an opportunity or an inspiration which will enable you to exercise your individuality still further in some definite way.

When 30 Repents the Marriage Made at 23

Mrs. M—Continued from page 78

of your married life his income has increased a third. Still, you find yourself "needlessly poor," without the "niceness" of surroundings you crave for yourself and your little daughter. Your small house is shabby and unpainted, you wash and clean and cook and have no time for your piano, you are disturbed about baby Jean's future.

For your straitened material circumstances I suggest two methods of relief. Try to manage better with the money that you have. Try to make a bit more.

It is difficult for the most sympathetic outsider to pass judgment upon any home's expenditures. But I conducted one, not so long ago, on a smaller fixed income than yours. I know women today who live tidily, bravely and without the sense of domestic slavery on $50 to $60 a week—yes, and they have not only a child but children. So may I ask, in all friendliness, if you are really getting all that you can from your husband's $300 a month—over $70 a week?

You are taking care of your mother, but you have only one small girl. Your husband may be lacking in energy and initiative, but at least he seems to be satisfied with simple and inexpensive pleasures, such as the garden and the *Scientific American*. Unless you are in debt for illness, or for some other heavy outlay you do not mention, it seems to me that if you set that keen mind of yours working on a family budget and on scientific home management you can achieve some of your ambitions for the amenities of life. You ought to be able to afford having the house painted. You ought to be able to pay for labor-saving machinery in your home, machinery which would lighten your present drudgery.

Perhaps you will answer that you are doing without these alleviations in order to save for Jean, since your husband's attitude toward the future is so lackadaisical. Then may I remind you of my second suggestion? Your baby is five years old. She either is in school or soon will be there. Your mother, a responsible person devoted of course to her granddaughter, is in your home. Why not look for a part-time job of your own?

With your training and experience as stenographer and librarian and your keen interest in work outside the home, you ought to be able to find paid employment for certain hours every day. More and more married women are demanding and obtaining part-time work; it isn't confined, any longer, to the advanced feminist. There [*Continued on page 82*]

The Little Courtin' Car

By

GERALD BEAUMONT

WITHIN a shingled shelter where its humble life began
A little car reposes by a stately new sedan;
Its tires are all in tatters and its hooded heart is still,
And never more shall little car toil bravely up a hill,
Or bear me down to Devon town along the gypsy trail
That links primeval forest to a poppy-painted vale.
So ancient is the little car that all the neighbors grin,
And wonder why my Love and I have never turned it in.

IT seems but only yesterday that I played Lochinvar
And went a-wooing Mary in that little courtin' car;
My Mary was the village belle, and I an awkward lad—
The roadster blue, designed for two, was all the wealth I had,
But Mary she was firm in faith, and I was strong in hope,
So in the little courtin' car we planned that we'd elope,
And well do I remember how contentedly it purred
As if in deep approval of the tender vows it heard!

WHAT joy divine could equal mine when Mary was my bride
And in the little courtin' car we started side by side
To Eden bent in sweet content beneath a sky so blue
I doubt if lovers save ourselves its equal ever knew!
And surely Nature saw in us some mystic King and Queen
For never was there Spring so fair, nor Summer so serene!
Small wonder that two hearts kept pace with merry motor's tune
As in the little courtin' car we spent our honeymoon.

THE roads of life are rough with strife, and many wrecks occur,
But they who hold to Hope and Faith, with Love as their chauffeur
Need have no fears that passing years will find the journey vain
For gifts like these are magic keys that open wide the lane,
And happiness lies close at hand, so very close I fear
We sometimes look so far ahead, we're blind to what is near,
And in the lust for larger things so busily we strive
We do not keep the precious flame of sentiment alive!

THE years have flown on fairy wings since Mary was my bride
And in the little courtin' car so happily we'd ride:
My Mary is a mother now, and I a father proud
Whom Fortune with a kindly hand has lavishly endowed;
But ever we shall lovingly retain the roadster blue
That bore us down to Devon town and was designed for two;
We'll not forget the humble days when I played Lochinvar,
And went a-wooin' Mary in that little courtin' car!

are still conservatives who cry that the wife who labors for money "breaks her husband's backbone"; in your case, they would be especially sure of the unwisdom of the move since your Bert seems not naturally a hustler. But I think that your taking a job may be a "spur to prick the sides of his intent" and, in any case, will not slow him up.

Don't pay household expenses, except for such services as you might perform if you were at home all the time. If it is true that your husband has no interest in his work, he needs the stimulus of having to provide a living for his family.

Better management of Bert's earnings, combined with some of your own, ought to make easier the material side of your life. Your psychological dissatisfaction remains.

Focus your intelligence upon it. Try to be logical—and don't think me cold-blooded for the suggestion. It is perfectly easy for me to understand your impatient resentment with a man who seems to you a stick-in-the-mud. I am rather a go-ahead person myself. Always there is difficulty in adjustment when such opposites mate.

Your husband is right when he says that he never pretended to be different from what he is. That you draped him with your own veils of illusion and married him before you pierced them is not his fault. Accept that fact. Add to it another: that your restless, fastidious, ambitious, somewhat embittered personality may be as difficult for him to live with as his type is hard on you!

Are you both, then, at an impasse? Not necessarily. You may be at the beginning of an equitable, make-the-best-of-it compromise.

Why not show him, frankly and non-rancorously, that you long for a closer, happier companionship? Why not interest yourself in his chosen recreations, his point of view? Then see if he will not be more ready to co-operate with yours. Work in the garden with him. Ask him about the new things in his scientific magazines. If he doesn't want to play cards or go to the theatre, ask him if he won't take you and Jean to the beach or to a picnic in the woods. He is obviously a devoted father; can you not attract him through Jean to a more normal social life? Try to show him that she must have friends as she grows up; that therefore you and he must offer and accept a certain amount of hospitality.

Never forget that he has his side of it; that there are other values in life besides calls and card parties and working feverishly for promotion; that not merely inertia but a feeling for simplicity, a deep contentment with elementary human affections, an honest natural aversion to contemporary go-getter standards, may motivate that big, slow, quiet, kindly husband of yours.

Finally, if it seems hard to get close to him in any other way, you have one perpetual meeting-place in Jean. He loves her. He wants to be a good father to her. You love her too.

You may have to find release for over-flowing energies and ideas in your own work. Other modern women do that. Many men, married to wives less intelligent, have thus worked off their dissatisfactions. But you can give affection to your husband, you can make the house of your life together serene and solidly based and useful—so long as there is a child in it whom you both love with tenderness and loyalty.

S-s-s-s-t—Continued from page 15

did you get that idea?" he demanded.

"A little while ago."

"It's the heat, dear. You'll get over it. There's no use getting on a high horse just because of the way I called to you in the hotel!"

He drove the car on down to the Budd's cottage by the river below them.

One half of Dorothy's mind busied itself with greeting Bert Budd and his wife and the guests, including Owen Rutledge. The other half was occupied with thoughts of Paul, doubly intensified by Owen's presence. It was a joy to see Owen again, but it was a shock to find that a girl had evidently been invited for him—one of Mrs. Budd's cousins from Connecticut, Natalie Toan, bright-eyed and attractive.

Owen looked awfully well, thought Dorothy. He had been visiting in Connecticut, he said, and Dorothy had a sudden sinking feeling, wondering if his visit bore any relation to Natalie Toan's presence.

Supper was going to be served out of doors in the field adjoining the cottage, and everybody was pressed into service in preparation for it. Mrs. Budd induced her husband to come down from the ladder on which he was painting the cottage, and lend a hand with the table—which was a large white door placed over blocks of wood for supports. Around it soap-boxes were ranged for seats. From the kitchen door nearby, everybody trooped with things for the table.

"Somebody's got to go for water," called Mrs. Budd from the kitchen.

"Grab the pails, Dorothy!" shouted Paul, "and we'll go."

"Owen is getting them," she replied. "I said I'd go with him."

"Oh!" For a moment Paul paused over the fire he was building. "All right—I thought you were tired."

Dorothy saw him watch her and Owen as they started through the gate toward the well. She walked in the narrow path while Owen went along at her side, stepping through the tall, daisy-starred grass regardless of its effect on his white flannel trousers. "That, too, is symbolic," she thought to herself. "Paul would have led the way and made me drag along after."

"It's good to see you again," said Owen as he put the pails down at the well.

Dorothy leaned on the railing and looked at him.

"It's good to see you, Owen." Already she thrilled again to the familiar pleasure of being with him. Somehow she felt that no distance, either of time or events, had separated them. He was still his companionable, easy-going self. She noted the fine color in his face. "You're sunburned."

"Yes. As soon as my classes ended I beat it up to Connecticut to visit Drake Peters. He has a marvelous place there—one of those old New England barns made over into a house, with electric light, running water, 'n everything—including a studio with a piano. I did a lot of work there. Musical comedy. Drake's writing the book. I'm doing the music. We worked at it every day until three in the afternoon, and then we'd get in Drake's old car—we called it 'Leaping Lena,' it missed on so many cylinders and jumped ahead by fits and starts—and we'd go down to Compo Beach and lie on the sand, soaking up sunshine. That's where I got all this burn."

"It's very becoming, Owen. When you get to be famous will you remember how you used to play the organ at the Strand Movies, and I sat in the front row, an appreciative audience of one?"

"Forget it? I guess not! It's one of the bright spots in my life."

Dorothy laughed lightly. How well she remembered those summer afternoons when he played the organ at the Strand to earn money to finish college, and she occupied a front seat close to him, her eyes on his moving fingers or on his sharp profile, sometimes cut in a black shadow against the lighted screen!

"I remember how you would often be extemporizing on the organ when the manager would appear at your side like an evil genius and hoarsely command you to stop it."

"And I did." Owen laughed. "I needed that money."

"And once you had been extemporizing so well that you leaned over and told me: 'Now, Dorothy, if I only had paper and pencil I'd write that down for you.'" She recalled how his eyes had glowed as he said it.

"I had been composing a love song. And the next moment the manager appeared, begging, 'For God's sake, boy, jazz it up a little!'"

They both laughed. Then Dorothy sighed.

"I used to get a crick in my neck looking at the screen."

"And I got a crick in my neck looking at you!"

Dorothy was silent for a moment, and then said:

"Natalie comes from Connecticut, doesn't she?"

"Yes. Her father is Bert Budd's uncle. She's engaged to Drake Peters. He's coming here next week."

"Oh!" She spoke more easily after that. "I thought maybe it was you and Natalie——"

"No, no! You know you're the only woman I ever cared about."

"Owen!"

"It's true. You know it is."

Dorothy smiled. She felt a sudden, warm glow within her.

"I know you'd better let that bucket down the well if you expect to get water in it."

"That is true, isn't it?" he said, wrinkling his eyes humorously at her. "That's what comes of teaching natural science." His eyes still hovered over her, but the

light in them grew deeper and graver. "How's everything with you, Dorothy?"

She knew he meant Paul.

"Oh, all right . . . I guess."

Her offhand reply did not deceive him at all.

"You aren't sure, are you?" He regarded her evenly. "Come on, Dorothy," he urged, "tell your old pal! What's the matter?"

"Well, Owen," she sighed, "I always *did* tell you everything."

"Then go ahead. What's the matter? Aren't you happy?"

She shook her head.

"No. I'm down in the dumps."

"About Paul?"

She nodded, and gulped to keep back a choking feeling in her throat.

"I've just begun to see that Paul is—is—oh, I don't know—but I wish he had your disposition!"

"Thanks, Dorothy. I wish I had his girl."

Dorothy smiled a wry smile.

"You're very consoling, Owen." She let her gaze dwell on his shoulders as he emptied the water bucket into the pail. "Do you know, Owen, I think that Paul's size has something to do with it? He's so big that he just naturally dominates people."

"Most of them like it."

"I suppose so. He's a born leader. But I'm not a born follower!"

"I know that feeling," agreed Owen.

"I want——" She paused, averting her face to hide her suddenly trembling chin. She was on the verge of crying. She had realized at last all that Owen meant to her. "I want to be happy. But—" Across the field from the cottage came a shout. "They're calling us, Owen. Frantically! We'd better hurry back."

She was glad to turn away before he could see her tears. As he came along close behind her, he said: "Do you know that line from Masefield? 'Fate, that is given to all men partly shaped, is man's to alter daily till he dies.' "

"Ummm," said Dorothy, thoughtfully. "It's nice."

While the rest of the party ate and laughed, Dorothy sat silent, occupied with her thoughts. The sun set beyond the hill and a big moon came up and looked into the river. Like an undulating mirror the lake distorted the reflection, making it weirdly globular in shape. It seemed to Dorothy that a similar distortion had taken place in her life.

She saw as the evening wore on that Paul was trying to get her alone for a moment, but everybody stayed late on the cottage veranda, talking and singing. Finally the party broke up. Bert Budd and Owen went up the road for a walk in the moonlight; the others started indoors to bed. Dorothy was about to enter the cottage when Paul stopped her.

He wanted to have it out with her. There was no use getting upset about nothing. Women were queer that way. In a few weeks they could get married. The nest-egg was big enough now—big enough for an eight-room house and a garage.

Dorothy replied that she wasn't sure she felt like marrying now. She had waited so long.

"With you, Paul, I feel like a native woman of some half-civilized country. You ride the mule and I trudge in the dust beside you! But with Owen, it's different. We're both on the mule, or both in the dust."

His lips set grimly.

"Has Owen been making love to you? Out here tonight?"

"No. Don't jump to that conclusion. It's just—well, I've been thinking."

"What?"

"That we aren't suited for each other after all."

"Bosh! Of course we are." He clapped one arm around her shoulder, and she winced. "We're suited and we're going to stay suited, dear. No two ways about it!"

She slipped out of his embrace, and murmuring a hasty good-night went into the cottage. Paul stayed on the porch after she left, smoking.

As Dorothy crawled into her cot she was thinking of all Owen had said to her at the well—and of a lot of things that might have been said. Even the echo of Owen's words made her heart beat faster. As she closed her eyes to the moonlight that fell through the open casement on her bed, she felt a glow like moonlight around her heart.

When Owen came back from his walk with Bert Budd, he found Paul waiting on the porch. On Paul's face was a look of righteous determination.

"Owen," said Bert, "you're bunking on the porch swing. Paul and I are sleeping in the room off the kitchen. Come on, Paul, let's hit the hay!"

"I'll follow you in a minute," said Paul. "I want to talk to Owen awhile."

Knowing Paul, Owen had a premonition of what was coming. He sat on the porch rail and waited.

"What ideas have you been putting into Dorothy's head?" demanded Paul, towering above him. "You know we're going to get married soon. What do you mean by coming around and trying to bust it up?"

"I haven't," replied Owen in an even voice. "If it's busting, it's happening of its own accord. Spontaneous combustion!"

A sound like a grunt came from Paul.

"I won't have you making love to Dorothy behind my back. Understand that!"

"I haven't been," said Owen. "You're wrong there. But from now on I'm going to. I'm going to make love to her in front of you or behind you—the first chance I get! You can't bully me out of it, Paul. You've tried that on me before. Sometimes I've let you get away with it—because you got such a kick out of it. But not this time. I haven't stopped loving Dorothy. And I'm going to tell her so."

"You do, and I'll smash your face!"

Owen only smiled.

"Steady, Paul! Be yourself." He got up and moved across the porch. "I'm going to sleep. You'd better do the same."

Paul went into the cottage slamming the screen door behind him with a violence which reached Dorothy's ears in the upper room. Then the house grew quiet.

When Dorothy fell asleep at length it was to dream a fantastic dream. She was sitting on a stump in the woods while Owen walked up and down in front of her saying nothing. She was rooted to the stump by a force stronger than a dream, an evil spell which a word would break. But Owen said nothing. Back and forth he paced, strangely oblivious to her longing and her agony. Then suddenly Paul appeared, a huge satyr looming out of the woods. He walked within two paces of her and stood still, glowering. He was going to speak and dominate her. She sat, dumb with fear, waiting for his lips to move, dreading the sound from his white teeth. Then it came. "S-s-s-s-t!" Automatically she leaped to her feet . . .

"S-s-s-s-t! S-s-s-s-t!"

She sat up, awake, the dream gone. There was a noise on the tiled roof outside her window. Kneeling on the bed, she looked out—and there on Bert Budd's ladder which projected over the roof was Owen. He leaned towards her in the moonlight, whispering:

"Listen to me, dear. I love you!"

"Owen! You're mad." But her tone was one of buoyant approval.

"I love you, I love you, I love you."

"Do you mean it, Owen?" she asked tenderly. "As much as ever?"

"More! A thousand times more! Put on some clothes and come down the ladder. I'll tell you all about it. It's a wonderful night!"

Dorothy could feel her heart beating madly.

"What—" she caught her breath, and spoke excitedly—"what time is it?"

Owen smiled at that, she knew.

"It's high time," he answered. "Are you coming, dear?"

"Yes," she said. A feeling of great elation swept over her as she moved from the cot and got her clothes. When she leaned over the window-sill again and looked down at Owen she said breathlessly: "If I come down, it will be forever."

The answer came swiftly and tenderly. "That's what I want."

Suddenly she paused, remembering something.

"When you woke me, Owen, did you hiss at me?"

"Yes, I went 's-s-s-s-t'! Why? Do you object to it?"

She smiled happily, thinking how circumstances altered cases.

"It's like cigar smoke, which my mother sometimes objected to. It all depends on who's on the other end of the cigar!"

The Yes Girl

Berton Braley's poem, illustrated by Arthur William Brown, in September McClure's will tickle the risibles of young and old alike. Everybody knows the "yes, yes" person who never disagrees, but the "yes" girl will be a surprise to many people. She's easily spotted by the younger crowd but it's doubtful if her tactics are quite so familiar to dad and mother.

were calling her again—impatiently now.

"Comi-i-ing!" she sang.

Before leaving the room she glanced out the window. Wilbur was wedged into the back seat between Alma and Mrs. Bruck, with his shoulders hunched up and his large hands dangling between his knees, wearing an expression of hopeless discomfort. Doc Jaggers was putting coats and rugs into the car, and little Annie was capering around, yelling shrill questions and getting in the way.

It would never do. She would have to get Fadden out of there and into the front seat. She ran downstairs and out upon the porch, stopped at the head of the steps, radiant and smiling, like an actress taking an encore.

"HELLO, everybody!" she sang. "Isn't it a peach of a day!"

"No, it's not," countered the Doc, who was a good-natured grouch. "It's the hottest August day they've had here since 1872, and I'll bet you what you want it'll rain pitchforks out in that canyon . . ."

But they weren't listening to him—they were looking at her. Each face except his reflected toward her a different emotion. She was aware of her mother's adoring anxious eyes, and of Alma's—fond, amused and a little irritated, as they always were when she showed off—but especially of Wilbur's. He seemed to contemplate her with a stunned and astonished delight, his mouth open, as if she were even more beautiful than he had remembered. He looked ridiculous, he looked absurdly young—and his ridiculous young adoration sweetly fed her spirit, filled her with conquering confidence.

"O, Doc! I forgot my jersey. It's in the hall. Run in and get it for me, will you please?"

She skipped down the steps as she said it, so he had to go, with a laughing grumble. She seized the handle of a heavy basket—mother always made lunches that weighed a ton—and threw her brightest smile at Wilbur.

"Give me a lift with this—will you please, Mr. Fadden?"

"O, sure—of course—excuse me." He floundered out of the back seat, seized the basket and flung it into the car with tremendous energy, as if action gave him relief.

Instantly she jumped into the driver's seat, and patted the cushion as she would have for a half-trained pup, at the same time throwing over him the net of her smile. He wavered a moment and then climbed in beside her.

"Mama, can I ride up front?" little Annie demanded.

"No, dear, you get in here with mother."

"Aw! . . . I want to ride up front. Can't I ride up front with you, Ruthie?"

"No, Annie. You know I can't drive with three up here."

"Aw, you've done it lots of times."

"Annie, you get in here with mother!"

Annie surrendered, whimpering, to the parental imperative, just as the Doc emerged.

"Hey there!" he exclaimed. "Aren't you going to let me sit up front and improve your driving, Ruthie? Aren't you my girl any more?"

That was like him, the old pest. He always seized upon a situation to make some kind of joke out of it. But Wilbur of course took him seriously and started to climb out, blushing.

"Don't you budge, Mr. Fadden," she told him. "I won't have that old thing up here criticizing my driving." And she put an end to arguments by starting the car.

Through town she went slowly, hoping to meet people. They stopped in front of a drugstore while the Doc went in to buy cigars. Mrs. Nooney and the twins drove past and she flashed them a sweet, triumphant smile. If the twins didn't succeed in meeting Wilbur it would be a blow to Mrs. Nooney, and it was one Ruth earnestly hoped she would feel. What an earful the old lady would give him if she ever got hold of him! And Mrs. Nooney was the kind that could tell any one anything in such a nice way. A twinge of fear went through Ruth. Instinctively she speeded up as they crossed the tracks and mounted the long slope from the valley. The town ended suddenly at the crest of low hills which drew a sharp line between cultivated valley and barren upland. Now it was time to talk, she knew, but she couldn't think of a thing to say. She was uncomfortably aware of him there beside her, and she knew he was feeling the strain of embarrassed silence even more than she, and was even less capable of breaking it. She threw back her head and took a deep breath, like an orator preparing for a great effort.

"Isn't this fine?" she demanded aggressively. "Don't you love it out here—in the West, I mean? People that come out from the East nearly always do. It's so much bigger and freer and—well—more unconventional."

It was a line she often took with Easterners when small talk was in order, and she had always considered it a good one. It conveyed a subtle implication that you weren't so slow. It was nearly always a reliable opening in a conversational pinch.

Wilbur made no answer for about half a minute. She thought at first he must have been struck dumb, but it appeared he was merely weighing his words. He took her remarks as a proposition which deserved to be considered on its merits.

"Well, there's more room out here," he conceded at last. "I like the mountains and they *do* give you a kind of a feeling that life may be different. But I can't see that it is. People are just the same everywhere I've ever been, and it's the people that count."

This simple exercise in good sense silenced her completely. What he said was true enough. That West you read about certainly had nothing to do with the real one. Where men are men! Like Conny Billop and Walt Gibby—piffle!

The car hit a chuck hole and they bounced up in the air and came down closer together, shoulders touching. The contact, slight as it was, gave her a curious, unexpected thrill. To steady himself he started to put his arm along the back of the seat behind her, then withdrew it again in an excess of shyness.

"That's all right," she ventured, with a little laugh. "If you don't hold on to something you're likely to bounce right out of the car. These roads are awful. They never do anything to improve them."

Gently she let herself slide up against him, harder and firmer. And he stood his ground, he didn't give an inch. She wondered if he were as much aware of the contact as she. And as if in answer to her unspoken query she felt a tremor run along his arm. She slid lower in her seat, wedged herself more and more into the angle of his embrace.

Nothing more was said and conversation seemed as unnecessary now as it had been imperative at first. Both of them were wholly absorbed in the stirring sense of their propinquity. Slowly she turned her head, dared to smile at him. But before their eyes could meet, the almost forgotten car took a rut and two wheels left the road to pitch and bump over tussocks of grass and greasewood. A confusion of protesting voices arose from the rear seat, which got the worst of the jolting.

"Hey there! Keep your mind on your work, young lady!" the Doc roared. "Don't forget that we're behind you!"

Mrs. Bruck had dived at the lunch basket, with a steadying hand.

"I heard something break, I'm almost sure," said she. "I hope it wasn't the mayonnaise."

"'Scuse me, people," Ruth called cheerily. She had the car back in the road with a deft twist.

"If you youngsters can't behave, I'll come up there and chaperon you," the Doc threatened.

This crude remark struck Wilbur like a blow on the side of the head. He fell far back into his own corner of the seat, blushing furiously, and stayed beyond her reach for a long time.

The mountains were a tilted block that showed the town a steep and seamy front, five thousand feet high. Pass Canyon clove it in the middle and made a way through to the plains beyond. The summit of the range had been, until a few years before, a place reached only by hard climbing on foot, but now a government road wound round and zigzagged up the back slope to within a mile of rimrock.

IN THE mouth of the canyon were little stores and booths selling hot dogs and pop; people were lunching under scattered cottonwoods along a dribbling stream in a boulder-strewn bed. Willow Springs Pavilion, the town's most refined amusement place, was a large unpainted thing like a wide low barn sitting back among cottonwoods. Drinks could be bought discreetly outside in cars, but decorum was preserved within, and the best people came for chicken dinners and dancing.

"We'll stop here on the way back if everybody isn't too tired," she told him, glad of something to talk about again. "You dance, don't you, Mr. Fadden?

"Yes . . . I like to."

Thank the Lord for that, she thought.

YOUR POWDER WON'T "*Show*"

when you use a *scientifically blended* shade of Pompeian Beauty Powder to match your skin

By MADAME JEANNETTE

Famous cosmetician, retained by The Pompeian Laboratories as a consultant to give authentic advice regarding the care of the skin and the proper use of beauty preparations.

You can give your skin a lovely uniform tone by using a selected shade of Pompeian Beauty Powder—the shade that exactly matches your skin.

A SOFT, delicate texture—a lovely satiny face—yet not a sign of powder. What *is* the secret of her alluring complexion? Does she use powder? She *does*, but a shade that matches so perfectly the tone of her skin that she secures the good effects of powder without seeming to use it.

All smart women strive for a natural complexion, but all do not achieve it. Not all women have found a powder that really matches their skin—a powder that reveals their natural coloring. Complexions are not composed of single colors, but a blend of different colors. Pompeian Beauty Powder is scientifically blended from different colors. Whatever the tone of your complexion, some one shade of this powder matches it perfectly. Select this shade from the directions that follow in the Shade Chart.

Pompeian Beauty Powder has gained its remarkable popularity because of its purity, its exceptional consistency, its delicate odor, its quality of adhering well—and its perfection of shades.

This charming type of American beauty, with gray eyes and brown hair, should use Pompeian Beauty Powder in the Naturelle shade to emphasize the lovely tone of her skin.

SHADE CHART *for selecting your shade of Pompeian Beauty Powder*

Medium Skin: The average American skin tone is medium, neither decidedly light nor definitely olive. This skin should use the *Naturelle* shade.

Olive Skin: Women with this type of skin are apt to have the dark hair and eyes characteristic of beautiful Spanish women. This skin should use the *Rachel* shade to match its rich tones.

Pink Skin: This is the youthful, rose-tinted skin, and should use the *Flesh* shade of Pompeian Beauty Powder.

White Skin: This skin is unusual, but if you have it you are the only type that should use *White* powder in the daytime.

In the evening under artificial light it may be better to use powder of lighter shade than the one recommended above. In case of doubt, write a description of your skin, hair and eyes to me for special advice.

* * *

If you have experienced the difficulty of having powder look "chalky and unnatural," buy a box of Pompeian Beauty Powder today, in the shade suggested for your special type. At all toilet counters 60c. (Slightly higher in Canada.) Purity and satisfaction guaranteed.

Madame Jeannette
Specialiste en Beauté

P. S. I suggest Pompeian Day Cream to protect your skin against the weather, and Pompeian Bloom for a touch of color.

Send for Liberal Sample of Powder

DO you not agree with me about matching your skin tones with the correct powder shade? Then I urge you to act on this advice, and see with your own eyes how much more beautiful Pompeian Powder will make your complexion. It is so easy to make this test. Just fill in the coupon and send it to me with 10c. In return, I will send you a generous sample of Pompeian Beauty Powder (enough for several weeks' use) and in addition a sample of Pompeian Bloom containing enough rouge for 30 applications.

It will never be easier to tear off the coupon than NOW, before you turn the page.

Madame Jeannette, THE POMPEIAN LABORATORIES
2204 Payne Ave., Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Madame: I enclose a dime (10c) for samples of Beauty Powder and Bloom.

Name .....
Street Address .....
City ..... State .....
Shade of powder wanted .....

"I'm a dub at everything else," he added, moving timidly toward confidence. "I mean, in the social way. When I was a kid I never got out enough. They kept me at home and I didn't have any brothers or sisters, and I wasn't very well, so I didn't play much. But they did send me to dancing school. I could dance almost as soon as I could read."

Without looking at him, she knew by the tone of his voice that he was blushing again. He wanted to explain himself—why he was such a booby. She understood. He wanted to snap out of his awkwardness and didn't know how. She liked him better and better. He was so simple and earnest and honest-to-God. She felt warmth for him welling up inside her. On a sharp curve she let herself slide up against him again. She dropped her hand as if accidentally on his, and gave it an almost imperceptible squeeze before withdrawing her own. She turned and smiled at him and for half a second their eyes met in a dawn of understanding.

The mountain had shouldered them into higher, wilder places. Houses no longer appeared, but only the road wriggling deftly up the easiest ascent. Scrubby juniper, cactus and oak gave way to tall pines with straight red boles, lifting green crests that gave a voice to the wind.

The road ended just where the spruce timber of high altitude began to displace the pine and scrub oak of the lower slopes. A sign designated this a camping place and another pointed the way to a spring, but the place was well marked without these, as a stamping ground for human herds, with bottles, tin cans and Sunday newspapers.

Under a great blue spruce they unloaded baskets, rugs, coats and mackintoshes, heavily upholstering the earth.

"The ground is so damp," Mrs. Bruck explained. "Even when it doesn't show it. You can't be too careful."

"I'm not so much afraid of dampness," said Alma, examining the terrain minutely. "But I hate ants. They crawl right up your arms."

"The ants you find around here hardly ever bite," Ruth said. "I've let them crawl all over me."

"Gosh! I wish I was an ant," the Doc languished.

She shook a finger at him.

"DON'T be vulgar, Doc," she cautioned sweetly. "You're enough of a nuisance without that."

Wilbur stood silent and ill at ease, with his hands behind him, obviously not knowing what to do or say. Alma, who generally assumed a certain command wherever she was, mercifully thrust a folding canvas bucket into his hands.

"Run down to the spring and get some water, will you please, Mr. Fadden? Right down that patch where you see the sign. Doc, you build a fire so we can make coffee and Ruth and I will unpack the lunch. No, don't you budge, Mrs. Bruck. Ruth and I will do it."

Out of a huge refrigerator basket emerged intricate trophies of Mrs. Bruck's housewifely skill. When merely the family went for a picnic the lunch was likely to be simple, but this was the kind of occasion that called forth every one of her many and varied culinary resources.

"Um-m-m-m! Look what's coming!" the Doc gloated. "Mrs. Bruck, any time you're having a picnic you can count on me, for one. And I don't care where we go, either."

"It's a perfectly wonderful lunch," said Alma. "And enough for a regiment."

Mrs. Bruck beamed and shrugged. This was the high point of the day for her.

"We got it up on such short notice," she lied timidly. "I just had to use whatever was in the house."

When they were seated Ruth appointed herself hostess and went about serving everybody with a sample of everything collected on paper plates.

"No, don't you budge, Alma!" she cooed. "I'm going to help everybody." And she felt just that way, full of tenderness, yearning to bestow herself somehow on everyone, knowing that she looked her best and that everyone was aware of her.

Wilbur seemed now, for the first time, an integral part of the group, for he had an excellent appetite and ate with enthusiasm.

The Doc, as soon as he had taken the edge off his hunger, was up to his old tricks. He suddenly pointed a solemn finger at Ruth.

"Are you eating that ham sandwich I put on that plate?" he demanded.

"I am," she replied. "And if you wanted it, you got left."

"I didn't want it . . . I just now saw a big black ant crawl into it. That's why I asked."

Ruth put on a convincingly dumbfounded expression and laid a hand prettily on the vicinity of her stomach.

"Horrors! You didn't!"

"I sure did," said the Doc. "Can't you taste him?"

"Of course, I can imagine I do now . . . I can imagine I'm poisoned . . . I think you're mean!"

Wilbur came to her rescue, drawing all eyes by his sudden emergence from silence.

"Don't let it bother you, Miss Bruck," he consoled. "There's nothing in an ant to hurt you. Nothing but a little protein and acid. No toxic substance whatever. Honestly!"

They all tittered except the Doc, who roared and slapped his leg.

"That's good! Have another ant, Ruthie. They're good for you. Wouldn't you like an ant sandwich?"

Wilbur blushed, a look of confusion came over his face, and then dissolved into a half-sheepish grin.

Lunch over, the dullness of digestion fell upon most of the party. The Doc and Alma moved to the shade of a smaller tree. He propped her comfortably against it and himself lay down at full length and lit a cigar.

Annie had discovered a temporarily absorbing occupation in making a necklace of pine cones. Mrs. Bruck had sunk back against the big tree with her eyes closed. The pervading torpor was encouraged by the weather. The breeze had dropped and it was warm and still, with clouds piling up in the East.

This was the moment Ruth had been waiting for. She jumped to her feet.

"Well, who wants to go to the top?" she challenged with a gay laugh.

Wilbur was on his feet at once. He said nothing, but he was obviously ready to follow her anywhere. Annie flung away her pine cones and jumped up and down with delight.

"I do! I do! I do!" she announced.

"No, Annie," Mrs. Bruck checked her. "I don't think you had better. It looks like rain. I really don't think any of us had better go far. I'm sure I couldn't walk a block."

"Me neither," said the Doc. "I wouldn't walk up there now for a thousand dollars. And it's gonna rain sure."

"You people are a lot of dead ones!" Ruth taunted. "Come on, Mr. Fadden. I guess we've got all the pep there is left in this party."

"RUTH simply never gets tired," Mrs. Bruck explained. "She wants to keep going all day and all night."

Alma, to Ruth's distress and surprise, got to her feet after a moment of visible hesitation.

"I wouldn't mind a little walk," she said. "But I don't think we'll get far before it rains."

"Well, come on—everybody that's going!" Her voice was not quite as sweet as she meant it to be. She started up the trail that led to the summit, Wilbur close beside her, Alma making a bad and unwelcome third, Annie trailing in the rear despite the parental negative.

Ruth turned on her crossly.

"Annie, you know mother told you not to come. Now you go right back!"

"I won't!" Annie was defiant, now she was out of sight of her mother.

Ruth turned and walked rapidly, with Wilbur faithfully keeping pace and Alma falling steadily behind.

"Don't go so fast!" she called once, but no one paid any attention to her.

Presently thunder rumbled a long way off.

"Now, Annie, you've simply got to go back." Ruth was firm. "You'll get drenched!"

"I don't care! I won't get any wetter than you will," Annie argued. But she was not quite so brave as at first. She was afraid of storms. When it thundered again, much nearer, she stopped and began picking wild flowers beside the trail. At the third peal Ruth turned and saw with relief that she was scurrying for cover.

Alma's voice came from behind a bend.

"Ruth! Come on back . . . It's going to rain, child."

Ruth turned to Wilbur who had followed her close and silent as a shadow.

"I don't believe it's going to rain, do you?" she demanded.

"Well, I don't know." He turned and scrutinized the sky, which was about the color of an old stove. Thunder boomed again, and jagged red lightning showed through trees.

"Let's go on anyway!" she proposed. "Who cares for a little rain? Let's go clear to the top no matter what happens!"

Her eyes were on him in painful suspense. He threw back his head and took a deep breath. A prophetic breeze, coming straight from storm, stirred his rumpled hair. Standing there staring into a black sky, he looked bigger, more self-

Miss Clark's Statement

Your Maison Marcellers placed a dandy bunch of marcel waves in my hair as the large photograph will show. This new method you have discovered is very effective and requires little time. You can hardly notice the time it takes as other things can be done while hair is drying.

The Lux Studio photographs show the good results obtained with the Maison Marcellers.

(Signed) MISS BEULA CLARK.

LUX STUDIOS
Commercial Photographers
Chicago

Maison de Beaute,
711 Quincy Street,
Chicago, Ill.

Gentlemen:

Here are the photographs taken of Miss Clark with straight hair, the wavers in place and just the unusually pretty wave put in with the Maison Marcellers.

The public demonstration conducted at the same time also at my studio was a tremendous success. All agreed enthusiastically that your new Maison Marcellers could place a very satisfactory natural wave in any hair.

They are sure to save time and much money for women everywhere.

LUX STUDIOS

WM. B. LUX

Glorious Waves Like This Week In . . Week Out

No beauty shop expense—no ruinous hot iron—no bothersome appointments

Just 30 Minutes—At Home—Whenever Convenient

Notice to Readers

A Chicago representative of this paper and representatives of over one hundred other nationally known magazines and newspapers witnessed a demonstration of these wavers and found them to be successful and very satisfactory.

IF anyone told you that you could have the loveliest marcelled hair you ever saw, every day in the year, without another trip to the beauty shop, without another ruinous touch of the hot iron or other torturous methods you wouldn't believe it.

Yet, it is literally true. You can have the most beautifully groomed, gloriously waved head of hair imaginable, all the time. And you needn't step outside your home to get it.

Just 30 minutes with the Maison Marcellers, once a week—right at home—and marcels, as perfect and lovely as the most skilled specialist in waving can give, will be yours from now on.

A $1.50 Marcel Saved Every Time You Use Them.

No one knows better than you how those trips to the beauty shop mount up. Your Maison Marcellers will save all this expense. Think of it! In no time at all, you have saved the price of a new frock. And the initial cost is practically nothing—just the price of a marcel or two—and you are free from waving expense forever!

It Waves While You Dress

What if someone does phone a dinner invitation just after you have come in from a swim, with your hair still damp? What if you do return from a blowy motor ride or a wave-ruining round of golf to find that the crowd is planning to leave in thirty minutes for a dance in a nearby town? You can be ready, with hair beautifully groomed and smoothly waved.

All you do is slip the Maison Marcellers on slightly dampened locks—and while you freshen up and change your frock, your hair is waving. At the end of thirty minutes you slip the Maison Marcellers off—and your hair lies in smooth, soft, loose waves about your face!

Restores Your Hair's Natural Beauty

Consider what happens to your hair when it is continuously waved with hot irons. As you know, each single hair is a tiny hollow tube. Every time the hot iron touches it each fragile tube is bent and twisted, first one way, then another. This constant bending back and forth soon breaks the hair off, and leaves you with a head of uneven-length, brittle hair.

You won't believe how quickly your hair will regain all the soft, silky lustre that Nature has bestowed on it, once you are free from the tyranny of hot irons, the hot blast of water wave "setting". A few months' use of the Maison Marcellers and your hair will recover its beauty. And after that, you will never go back again to hair-ruining irons.

Maybe you have let your hair go completely, worried along with straight, straggly, unkempt locks, because your hair could not longer stand the ruinous waving methods. This is your chance to have again all the softening, becoming beauty of naturally waved locks.

For Any Kind of Hair—For Any Arrangement

The photographs reproduced above tell more plainly than words just what a wonderful wave the Maison Marcellers achieve. The prominent photographer who took these pictures has given an affidavit testifying to the facts. The model herself was so delighted with the results of the Maison Marceller wave that she also added her statement to that of the photographer.

For no matter whether your hair is soft and fluffy, coarse and straight, long or short, the Maison Marcellers will give you a wave of unbelievable beauty. No matter how you wear it—in a shingle bob, Ina Claire, horseshoe wave or pompadour, center or side part—you will have a perfect marcel, perfectly suited to the style you prefer.

It is the simplest thing in the world to do. Just place the Maison Marcellers on your hair and catch the locks in place. The Maison Marcellers adapt themselves to any style—any requirement. They are amazingly comfortable on the head, too. Made of soft rubber, light and flexible, scientifically designed. If you have had a "permanent," the Maison Marcellers are just the thing you need to change its kink into a lovely, natural wave or they will replace its disappearing curl with a smooth, even marcel. Of course, if you haven't had a permanent, there is no need ever to have one, Maison Marcellers make other waving absolutely unnecessary.

Before putting this Marcelling Outfit on the market, we asked fifty women to try it out and give us their opinion. Without exception, they were most enthusiastic about it. Here are part of some of the letters we received.

Miss M. S., Chicago: I recently had a permanent wave put in my hair and since then have had lots of trouble making my hair look right. But with your Maison Marcellers I no longer have to bother with water combs and now my hair is always beautifully marcelled.

Mrs. A. K., Memphis: I am cursed with thin, straight hair that is unusually hard to wave. I have tried many home marcelling outfits, but have always been disappointed until your Maison Marcellers came. Now I can easily keep my hair in a dandy marcel, just the way I want it. I can't say too much for your new invention.

Our Wonderful, Time-Limited Offer

Just to establish this revolutionary new invention—just to put it into the hands of the women whose words of praise will sweep the Maison Marcellers throughout the country, we are making this special offer to you, as one of the first 10,000 women to own this priceless boon to beauty: *A complete set of Maison Marcellers, including a new and authentic marcel fashion chart, for only* **$2.98**, *plus a few cents' postage—a price that scarcely covers the cost of making, packing and advertising.*

Send No Money—Just Mail the Coupon

Even at this special price, you need not risk a penny. Just sign and mail the coupon. In a few days, when the postman brings your outfit, just deposit $2.98 with him (plus a few cents' postage). And when you put in your first marcel, you'll say it was the best purchase you ever made in your life, for your hair waving troubles are ended. Every time you use this outfit, you'll get better and better results and you'll never have to spend your good time and money for marcels again. After you have tried this marvelous new marcelling outfit for 5 days, if you are not delighted with results—if it doesn't give you the most beautiful marcel you ever had and improve your hair in every way—simply return the outfit to us and your money will be refunded quickly and cheerfully. But don't put it off. Be among the first to take advantage of this special introductory offer. Fill in and mail the coupon today!

All Your Questions Answered in Advance

To anticipate the questions which come up in many women's minds we offer the following answers which are vouched for by any woman who has used Maison Marcellers.

Will the hair be entirely dry at the end of thirty minutes?

Answer: Yes. In using the Maison Marcellers, you merely dampen it.

Is all of the hair waved by the Maison Marcellers?

Answer: Yes. The hair is waved right down to the end.

Is all the hair marcelled at one time?

Answer: Yes. There are ten Marcellers in the set, sufficient to do the hair in one operation.

Is more than one set needed in a home?

Answer. No. One set of Maison Marcellers will do very nicely for the family.

How long does the hair retain its waved condition?

Answer. Not less than one week, in most cases ten days to two weeks.

How long do the Marcellers last?

Answer: They last indefinitely. We've never known a set to wear out in service.

I have a permanent, can I use these Marcellers?

Answer: Yes you can use them. Regardless of how fuzzy the permanent is it can be shaped into a perfect marcel by these Marcellers.

Maison de Beaute

711 Quincy St. Chicago, Illinois

COUPON

Maison de Beaute,
711 Quincy St., Dept. 23, Chicago, Illinois.

Gentlemen:

Please send me your newly invented marcelling outfit, including set of Maison Marcellers, Marcel Style Chart, and complete directions for waving, which I will follow. I agree to deposit $2.98 (plus postage) with the postman when he makes delivery. If I am not delighted with results I will return the outfit within 5 days and you are to refund the purchase price without argument or delay.

Name.....

Address.....

City.....State.....

NOTE: If you expect to be out when the postman comes, enclose $3.10 with your order and the Marcelling Outfit will be sent postpaid.

sufficient than he ever had to her before.

"Sure," he said quietly. "I'd like to. I always liked storms. They're kind of stimulating. Ozone, you know."

As they toiled on up the trail, the storm seemed to hesitate as to which way it would go. The thunder retreated and there was no more lightning. They walked in silence, Wilbur with long easy strides, his eyes on the ground. Now and then he stooped, picked up a rock and threw it with an elaborate assumption of being absorbed in his aim.

It was just the same as in the car. They were so intensely conscious of themselves and of each other that they couldn't talk. He was too shy and she was too keenly aware of his shyness. Here they were toiling up a mountain in the face of a storm, running away from others, just to be alone, and both of them knew it. Yet neither by word nor touch could they reach each other.

They came to a place in the trail where a ledge of granite made a sharp step two feet high. He took it in a stride, but she stalled with a comic groan, and when he turned, reached a hand for help. He seized it and yanked her up with too much energy, so that she fell against him. He might have had her in his arms almost by accident, but he didn't lift a finger. They stood looking at each other, so close together she could feel his breath. She could see color mount in his face. She smiled at him her slow full-lipped challenging smile and then looked down. His knees were shaking visibly.

As he turned away he picked up a rock and threw it at a tree with savage force.

They were high up now, in the zone where spruce and aspen struggled in dense ranks for possession of the rich black soil the mountain lifted up to catch abundant rain and snow. They stopped to get their breath. Clouds had parted for a moment letting sun through.

"Isn't it lovely?" she said.

"I never saw anything like it," he said, speaking very quietly. "It's wonderful. You feel as if you ought to talk in a whisper, don't you?"

She nodded, delighted. That was just the way it made you feel—something you couldn't express.

They went on slowly, not talking but not needing talk so much as before. The clouds presently closed again and the spruce forest seemed menacingly dark.

The wood which had seemed such a friendly and beautiful place a moment before was now a menacing one. Suddenly she felt a thrill of unreasoning fear, and looked about, wishing there were a house, a tent even—any man-made thing for shelter.

"Maybe we better go back," she said, hesitating. "Maybe we better run for it."

He smiled at her for the first time. For the first time he had an advantage. He was timid about many things but storms were not among them.

"All right," he said. "But I think it's too late . . . We'll get just as wet one way as the other."

Well, she was not going to be more afraid than he was—not if she died for it.

She laughed, a little shakily.

"All right, then. We'll go on."

She started resolutely up the mountain. Thunder crashed and lightning flared right before them, so that they seemed to be charging some awful foe in full action. Wind rushed down the mountain, suddenly chilling them, almost throwing them together. She seized both of his arms in her hands, clutching them tightly, and there was no coquetry in the gesture. The first big drops, running before the storm, pelted through her dress and chilled her skin.

He was surveying the scene coolly.

"That big tree up the hill there," he decided. "Let's make a run for it."

A wide spruce with a great rock directly to windward promised almost perfect protection. They started up the slope, scrambling desperately. The ground was slippery with a coat of fallen needles. They tumbled and got up again, laughing and panting, fear forgotten in the delight of sudden action. They had outrun for a moment all that held them apart.

When they had almost reached the tree, she stumbled, he tried to catch her and they fell together in a tangle of arms and legs, shaken and helpless with laughter.

The laughter died, conquered by the shock of their contact as he got to his feet and lifting her, released her with reluctant hands. They stood facing each other, forgetting the weather, breathless with a sense of crisis. Rain broke over them full force, drenching them. It plastered her dress to her body. His eyes wide and bewildered before this revelation, he reached out wet hesitating hands, touched her, held her, drew her toward him and covered her lifted face with wet unskillful kisses.

They forgot all about their resolution to go to the top. They had reached the goal for which they really had started.

When the brief hard rain was over they started back down the mountain, a bedraggled but undaunted pair. It was cool now, almost cold, with a steady wind blowing.

They went down the slope in long easy strides. Their feet seemed to be running away with them. They looked at each other and laughed. Every few yards he seized her in his arms again and kissed her, and his kisses became always more confident and dominating. They found her lips, bit deeper, and lasted longer. There was something he wanted to say and at last he blurted it.

"O Ruth, I suppose you'll think I'm an awful boob, but I want to tell you—I never kissed a girl before—I never knew kisses could be like that."

She didn't laugh, didn't feel like laughing. She wanted to make up to him for all the long time he had gone unkissed. She threw her arms about his neck, pulled his head down hard to her lips, pressed her body against his. Then pushed him suddenly away.

"We must hurry," she said. "They'll be awfully sore at us for staying away so long."

To get warm they ran down the path.

"Please don't look at me," she begged. "I'm such a mess."

"You're not. You're wonderful!"

She stopped and fished out her vanity case, studied herself in the little round mirror as she powdered her nose. She didn't look so badly, considering. The wind was drying her light fluffy hair and her face was flushed prettily.

Rain was over. Sunlight was silver on wet aspen leaves and birds were singing. Going through an open glade they heard a smash of brush and a bounding thump, turned to see a great gray deer, with wide antlers in the velvet, bounce high four times and disappear.

They watched it out of sight and turned to look at each other with wonder-widened eyes, as if they had seen something supernatural.

"Wasn't it beautiful?" she said softly.

He stood looking at the forest that had swallowed it, nodding slowly.

"You're like that," he told her solemnly. "You're just like that. Perfect!"

"You big foolish!" She kissed him swiftly, and hurried on. Mixed feelings churned around inside her so that she wanted to run from them.

They came in sight of the car suddenly. Neither of them had realized they were so near it. They hesitated, traded glances which said they wished they were alone again. It was too late.

"There you are!" the Doc sang out from behind the side curtains. "We were just about to get out a search-warrant for you. We've been sitting in this bus an hour, freezing to death."

"Well," Ruth explained lamely, "it started to rain and we had to get under a tree."

The Doc poked out an observing and sardonic face.

"You must have picked a poor tree," he remarked.

"O Ruth!" Mrs. Bruck wailed. "You're terribly wet, dear! You'll take cold. I told you not to go."

"No, honestly, Mother, I'm almost dry again. I'm not a bid cold . . ."

"Well," Alma observed, "we certainly can't stop at the Springs now."

"O yes!" Ruth protested. "Please! We want to dance. We can go home and change first. It only takes twenty minutes. Please, Alma, we want to dance, don't we, Mr. Fadden?"

For the first time he asserted himself, and she joined him.

"We want to dance!" they chorused.

But even in her triumph a shiver of apprehension ran through Ruth. It was Saturday night. Eva—Walt—Conny—— What if they should be at the Willow Springs Pavilion too!

NEXT MONTH

The triumph and the test of Ruth's conquest comes on Saturday evening. Her appearance at the Pavilion with Wilbur Fadden causes a stir among her friends; and the men who ignored her formerly, now will not let her alone. But their attentiveness is the very thing Ruth dreads—with what cause is disclosed in the brilliant conclusion of HOT SATURDAY in the September McClure's.

The Gas Man

—Continued from page 17

excited, y'know, that a man jest blows up and gives 'em what they want. But ther's some of 'em can think almost as good as a man. My cousin, Lottie Fierce, frinstance. Lottie keeps so cool that any fella, after making love to 'er, has to put his hands in the ice-box to git 'em warm. Well, she married Grover Lux, not because she loved him, but because he was manager of a Easy Payment Furniture House. She held 'im off till one night he tole 'er that two could live cheaper'n one. Then she nabbed him to take advantage of the discount.

"Grover and Lottie was delighted. They found that, as a couple, they could save a dollar a week on room-rent and a nickel a day on board. And regular every year Lottie deals Grover a pair o' twins. 'Because,' says she, 'if two can live cheaper 'n one whacha looking so sore about?'

"AND now, Brother Pinkus, I'm gonna tellya how to save a whole wadda money. Yotta have yer brakes relined. I can give ya a silk lining, self-striped in the latest London pattern, for ten per cent less'n McCall's stylish garage up Main Road can do it for. What I save on overhead goes inta yer pocket, see?

"I'll tellya, neighbor, a brake's important, whenya need it. Yestiddy Bill Hennessey that drives for that Greek candy firm, Fracas & Chaos, turns out ta save a widow and orphan tryin' t' cross th' road at the corner of G and Hesper Streets. Brake didn't work, so next thing he knew he was going right through the window of Madam Pumpadore's Beauty Parlor. He breaks a lotta glass, knocks down two wax statutes of Venus de Milo and next he knows he's come to a dead stop in a back room where Madam was a-shaving the whiskers off a bearded lady. So the bearded lady run outa the place with one side of 'er face looking like Gilda Gray and the other like Charlie Hughes.

"And it was hard luck, too, becuz it happened that Ringling Bros. and Sam Shubert was passing by. Ringling Bros., what hires this lady in summer, seen the smooth side of 'er face and Sam Shubert, what hires her in winter, seen the feathered side. Now she's out of a job—'less she appears as Before and After in one o' them drug store windows.

"Nossir, false economy don't pay nobody . . ."

"How much gasolene did you put in?" asked Mr. Pinkus doggedly.

"Lemme see. Twelve gallons." Hen was all business.

"But it's only a ten-gallon tank," objected Mr. Pinkus.

"Does that prove anything?" asked Hen Dall. "If it does I ain't gonna argue. Time's money. It's the most valuable thing we got. That reminds me of a one-legged tight rope walker I met up to Boston. He . . ."

But the Ford was leaping off from chuck hole to chuck hole.

Two Beauty Crimes

Ended for you by this NEW and TOTALLY DIFFERENT way of removing cold cream

THE RIGHT WAY

1

THE SOILED TOWEL METHOD

Rubs germ accumulations back into the skin, inviting scores of imperfections.

PLEASE ACCEPT—7-day supply to try, the only way that removes ALL germ-laden accumulations from the pores

IN the last few months, an average of 10,000 women *a day*, have adopted this *new and totally different way* of removing cold cream from the skin.

Virtually every important beauty expert in America urges this new way. Scarcely a prominent motion picture or stage star today but employs it. It marks one of the most sensational beauty successes in years.

It lightens a darkish skin several shades or more. It keeps "make-up" fresh hours longer than before. It curbs oily skin and nose conditions amazingly.

Please accept a full 7-day supply to try. It will end for you, two crimes against skin beauty most women who use cleansing creams have unconsciously been practicing for years.

1—Rubbing germ-laden matter back into the skin with towels, cloths, etc., which lack in absorbency; 2—irritating your skin by rubbing cold cream off with harsh material. Scores of skin imperfections now are largely traced to these factors. Stop them, and you'll be amazed at the difference.

2

THE HARSH CLOTH METHOD

Injures delicate skin fabric—causes enlarged pores, skin roughness, etc.

A scientific discovery

This new way is called Kleenex 'Kerchiefs—*absorbent*—a new kind of material—different from any you have ever seen—developed in consultation with leading skin authorities *solely* for the removal of cold cream correctly from the skin.

It has 27 times the absorbency of the ordinary towel. It is the only way yet discovered that properly removes all dirt and germ-laden matter from the pores.

It quickly curbs oily nose and skin conditions. For those are largely caused by cold cream left in the skin which the pores thus constantly exude.

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Kleenex 'Kerchiefs—*absorbent*—come in exquisite flat handkerchief boxes, to fit your dressing table drawer . . . in 2 sizes:

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her cheeks. Her chin shook childishly.

"They used to hurt you, didn't they?" he wanted to know, and his voice was sad.

Tessie lifted her face. The tears were still wet on her cheeks but a smile already gleamed in her eyes. Tessie was like the springtime—a quick shower, and at its heels a bright sun drying up all traces of rain.

"OH WELL, there was Gyp the Dandy," she replied flippantly, playing with the fan. "He used to hurt me and once I had to go to the hospital. Just the same he came to see me. And I was glad he came. I was so glad he came!" Tessie opened the fan and let it drop shut on her lap. "I wanted to give him something for coming. But there wasn't a thing I had, nothing but a little old ring, bent and mostly green. I gave him that. And what do you think he did with it?"

Tingaling didn't know, and signified as much.

"He threw it into a crap game the same night right after he left me. That's what Long Mackey told me!" And she sighed.

"Yes?" was all that came from Tingaling. He was puffing gravely away at his pipe, his eyes calm, his yellow face as smooth and unwrinkled as new thin silk on the bolt.

Tessie went on to tell of the life at the black house. Strangely enough, it all seemed like a dream to her now, as if she had stepped out of it as she stepped out of soiled underclothes.

Now she was a good girl, and as she worked in the two small rooms, she even sang a little. She taught Tingaling a song or two, and he played them on a weird instrument he had, all strings and thin echoes. It was peaceful here, but it was a fearful sort of peace. She kept her ears wide open and her head half turned behind her. Tingaling seemed calm enough, but he was listening too, every minute of the day and night. They seldom spoke of it, but they both waited for the thunderbolt to drop down between them. In her sleep she often dreamt that Gyp the Dandy had caught her and was taking her back with him, and she would cry out:

"Tingaling! Tingaling!"

He would patter over to her bedside, a quiet shadow in gray, and kneel down, stroking her hand with his cool fingers until she fell asleep again. She never fell asleep without telling him fiercely: "They'll find me yet, they'll find me yet, never fear!" Then, she would turn her sentence completely around and say: "They'll never find me, never, never! Will they Tingaling?"

"Go to sleep, little lady!" he would whisper softly, and when she was dropping off she could hear him talking to himself as he pattered away: "White! White! I want to keep her beautiful!"

She couldn't fathom what he meant, but she knew he intended it as a tribute to her.

Tessie beautiful! Why, nobody had ever told her that she was pretty, let alone beautiful. She saw herself as she was, with her long face and her white skin, and her coarse black hair, so thick that when it fell on her cheeks, it fell in waves. She had very black eyes, and the thin skin of her eyelids was several shades darker than the skin of the rest of her face so that when she closed her eyes it seemed as if she were still looking through them. Her lips were very full and very red, and when she smiled teeth showed as even and as shiny as piano keys.

Sometimes Tessie was sad. Sometimes she was gay. But always, she was easily frightened. Frightened of a mouse, which one day jumped out of the garbage can; frightened of the nights when it rained and the drops made a sound of finger-nails on the windows; but most of all frightened of the outer door when it went ting-a-ling and let people in and out. She would look around for a place to hide, race from corner to corner, and end up by standing helpless in the center of the floor.

Tingaling never said anything, but when he went out to buy things he always locked the door securely behind him, and he worked with one cheek constantly turned toward the door-bell as if he were expecting visitors.

It was mostly only customers who made the cheery ting-a-ling of the door-bell resound through the shop. But once Tingaling did have a visitor—a tall sailor-man whom Tessie saw for such a short moment that all she could remember of him afterwards was the shine of very white teeth in a very brown face, and a laugh that made the shop seem suddenly smaller than usual. Tessie had nodded at him sociably as the Chinaman said: "This is my fren', Bill," and had walked out of the room with a whirl of her red skirt. She could see through the back of her head that his eyes followed her out.

Sometimes when Tingaling went out he would be gone for hours. Then Tessie would run nervously out of the two small rooms into the shop and back again, always ending up in front of the little marble clock with its stony face, its lazy hands moving so slowly that they maddened her. She would open the glass and whirl the hands round and round and round, leaving it at some crazy hour of the day.

Then all of a sudden, she would hear the key turn, and he would come in. They would both stand still, quite still, looking round to find each other, and seeing each other there they would both become a little shy. Tessie would pick up a street song by its middle and begin to hum it carelessly. Tingaling's smooth face would wrinkle up into a smile, a quick, fleeting smile. They would look at each other for a long moment, then turn without a word to their tasks.

"What's your real name?" Tessie asked him roguishly one evening.

He looked up with his black brush poised mid-air. He was covering small slips of salmon-pink paper with Chinese characters—laundry slips for the next day.

"Tingaling will serve the purpose!" he said simply, and planted his brush into the inkwell.

"Why don't you tell me about yourself, Tingaling?" Tessie asked in a voice that invited confidences. "About your friends?"

Tingaling dropped two fingerfuls of fresh tobacco into his pipe and patted them down gently. "There isn't much to tell," he parried. "I had one friend, and he went back to China."

"Who was he?" she popped.

"Fellow called George," was his answer. "Do you know, you white people make a great mistake to think just because we're yellow, that we do not come from fine families. Your school teachers take a trip abroad, during their vacations. It means little sacrifice to them. But a journey to America for a Chinaman is a great, great event. He cannot afford to come unless he had a very rich family to send him."

"Are you rich?" Tessie asked demurely.

"I am rich in China," he replied. "I am what would be in England a duke. George was a prince, of royal blood, yet he came here and took a course in engineering, and earned his degree—how do you think?"

Tessie shook her head.

"He worked for some white people as valet! And now he has gone back to Pekin to take charge of laying out the sewer system. That is a more important job than being Mayor. Your newspapers would speak of it like this: "From valet to mayor!" and Tingaling chuckled.

Tessie eyed him thoughtfully, her black eyes full of dreams.

"I've one other friend, American!" Tingaling announced shortly. "That is my friend, Bill. He goes sailing, sailing, sailing all the time. He doesn't care what you are, or who you are, just so he likes you."

"And what's his long name?" Tessie demanded.

"William Templeton," replied Tingaling. "He likes you. You are pretty. He likes pretty girls."

Tessie looked up quickly and frowned.

"Oh, no, no!" Tingaling assured her. "He's a good man. A very good man." And Tingaling drew a long breath. Tingaling had never talked so much before, and even Tessie was surprised.

"Lonesomeness is just like drowning!" he went on. "When a strong man is lonesome, he's very weak, very weak. He goes looking around with the lamps in his eyes, but all he sees is darkness. Then a woman comes up, like a moon in the sky——" Tingaling droned, and he lapsed into the Chinese poem that sang of it in short, thin words.

SOME of it Tessie understood. Some of it she didn't. She liked to listen to Tingaling's voice. It sounded like a little song shut up in a music box. But to talk too long or to be too serious made her tired. She wanted to play, and she wanted Tingaling to play with her, which he did.

She wore the same size shoes as he did, and when she discovered this she took his from under the bed one day and waltzed around the two rooms, round and round, as proud as a strutting bird.

He laughed softly when he saw her, and made her turn her face toward the wall while he rummaged through the bureau.

Then he wheeled her about and filled her arms full of beautiful silks. "These are Chinese clothes!" he explained. "Put them on!"

Tessie slipped into the black silk trousers and the richly embroidered black silk coat. "Chickens!" she exclaimed delightedly, tracing the outlines with her forefinger.

"No! No! No! child!" he corrected her. "That's not a chicken. That's the mandarin duck, the symbol of conjugal happiness."

"And what's this and this?" she wanted to know excitedly.

"THIS is the bamboo and this the pine. The Chinese always combine the two in a garden to remind them of things that pass away quickly and of other things which are permanent. The pine is evergreen, you see. Now, this is the river of life," and he pointed to the rich stitching in the silk, "flowing down among the pines." And he followed the river with his finger, stopped suddenly, looked up into Tessie's face and laughed. "And here's another one of your chickens"—he said "cheekens"—"but it's not a chicken this time either. It's a crane, the sign of a long life."

"I'll be jiggered!" she exclaimed. "Why——"

But she never finished her sentence. They both stood quite breathless, listening. There was some one at the doorknob, rattling it faintly. Tessie put her head down like an animal ready to charge. But Tingaling's face lay like a full moon under the sputtering gas light, yellow and impassive. The rattling ceased as suddenly as it had come, and though they stood there fully five minutes, nothing happened.

Tessie was the first to speak. "If Gyp the Dandy saw me now—" she said wearily, and let the rest of the thought trail behind her as best as it could. Then she took off the embroidered coat and passed it slowly over to Tingaling. "It's all gone," she said softly, "whatever it was that made me so happy before." And she pulled the poppy out of her hair.

Tingaling nodded. "One's cup of happiness is as full or as empty!" he said gravely, and folded the silken coat carefully away.

The next morning at the breakfast table the doorbell rang. Quickly Tingaling went out into the shop.

Through the crack in the door Tessie saw the tall sailorman, Bill, who had come in before, so she fluffed up her hair with her fingers and twitched her skirt straight.

"Hello," she announced, sliding around the door.

"Hello," answered Templeton, standing stiff and embarrassed before her.

Tessie switched about the room while Tingaling and the sailor talked. In snatches she took him in. She liked his tallness and his thinness; the contrast of his light eyes with his tanned skin; the freckles over his nose. And though there was nothing to laugh about, his wide generous mouth was open in a grin, showing two rows of teeth so white that they might well be the envy of a tooth-paste concern.

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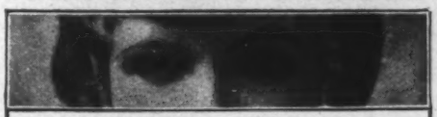

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When Tingaling and the sailor went out together, Tessie was left with an odd empty feeling quite new to her. She tried whirling the fat slow hands of the clock around, but that didn't make time go any faster. Then she spent quite a while examining a letter to Tingaling that the postman slipped under her door. It was postmarked China, and smelled of the sea.

FINALLY Tingaling's key in the door brought her running. But when she handed him his letter he thrust it without a glance into his black jacket, and whispered to Tessie to follow him into the inner room.

"They are watching the place!" he told her, in a calm voice. His face was as serene as if he were uttering some commonplace. "There are two rough men and a boy!"

It was Tessie who was the excited one. "Oh!" she cried, and began wringing her hands. "Was one of them a guy with a scar across his cheek?"

Tingaling said yes. "But never mind," he added, "never mind." And he left her to answer the doorbell, which tinkled just then.

Tessie was alone. She was thinking fiercely of Gyp and of the Mackeys as she walked back and forth in the narrow room. Suddenly she remembered that Tingaling had gone out in summons to the bell. She stopped walking, and leaned heavily against the bureau. Perhaps it would only be that sailor, Bill, again, she comforted herself, or a customer. But other wild thoughts soon flung these aside. Had Gyp found her? Ah, leave it to him to know, just as he knew whatever little things he needed for his profession. Once, she remembered, he had trailed his man to a cellar in Mott Street, after everybody else, including the police, had given up the job.

"Oh, hush!" she whispered hoarsely, and beat her chest with excited slaps of her hand. "Oh hush! Maybe it's somebody else altogether!" She stopped gripping the edge of the bureau and walked on her tiptoes toward the door.

But it wasn't somebody else. It wasn't somebody else as she had hoped. She knew that harsh, drawling voice the minute she heard it, the way it went up and ended in a whistle. Gyp the Dandy always talked as if he had a bad cold.

"Where yer hidin' her?" she heard him bellow. Tingaling's response was too soft to catch, though she strained herself against the door to listen. "Where yer hidin' her?" he repeated twice as loud.

Tessie looked out through the narrow crack in the door.

"She's inside, in there, isn't she?" Gyp the Dandy was saying, and he walked half the length of the store in that swagger way he had, his hands big bulges in the patch pockets of his sporty checked suit. "What're you holdin' her fer, you chink?" he bullied, and here he stopped to borrow a smoke from one of his confederates, and leaned over to accept a light from the other. "Don't you know she's my girl, and any one who tries to take my girl away from me——" and he threw a meaningful thumb over his shoulder, looking at his colleagues for approval.

Under the stained gray cap Gyp wore, his wide broken nose appeared crookedly. He had small blue eyes, set very close together, and from one eye along the full width of his cheek ran the deep scar that Tessie had mentioned. In looking at it, one expected the blue of his eye to run into his cheek like a river.

Gyp the Dandy gave the impression that he had all the time in the world in which to dispose of the little matter concerning Tessie. What he wanted to do in the interim was to play around with Tingaling for the diversion of himself and his confederates.

"Now see here!" he repeated, and he came quite close to Tingaling, switching his cigaret to the other side of his mouth and planting his thumbs in his pockets. "See here! Where's the girl?"

Tingaling said nothing. He had dropped his head on his chest, and his smooth forehead shone like pale amber.

Tessie, watching through the crack, sensed it all, the oriental and the occidental mind pitted against one another—the occidental, blustering, direct, itching to fight; the oriental, suave, possessed, playing for time.

But the next thing she heard stunned her. She stopped slapping herself on the chest and let go of the door. It began to creak slowly away from her, opening wider and wider, and she watched it fascinated, wanting to pull it back, to shut it fast, but unable to reach out an arm to save it. The words she heard Tingaling saying were bullets in her heart, deadly bullets, killing her. The things he was saying!

"Go ahead, tak' her!" Tingaling was telling Gyp in a calm, unruffled voice. "I don' wan' her. She come here. I don' ask her. She stay here. I don' ask her. I tell her go the firs' day!" he said complainingly, shrugging his black shoulders to make his disinterest the more apparent. "The firs' day!" and he turned his hands outward so that his empty palms showed. Nothing hidden there was what the motion implied.

Tingaling talked on, still in the same, calm, complaining voice. "I tell her go the secon' day. Who wan' her?" It was a little squeaky song now, each word struck on the same monotonous treble key.

Then Tingaling moved a step closer toward Gyp. He lifted his hand for silence and on his face there was a crafty, confidential look. "Go on, you tak' her!" he whispered to Gyp. "I glad!" and he smiled broadly, showing his narrow yellow teeth. "You tak' her. I busy!"

This time he looked over at the others for approbation, at the tall fellow who sniffed and had no handkerchief, at the short fellow with the old face, pimply.

"I don' wan' your girl!" Tingaling told Gyp for the last time. And without another word he turned his back on the whole affair, picked up his iron, tested it with a wet finger, and began to work briskly.

Gyp the Dandy was evidently surprised and made no pretense of hiding it. "Whew!" he whistled piercingly. His face dropped, the fire left his angry blue eyes. He spit his cigaret out of his mouth and crushed it slowly with the heel of his yellow shoe. Then he looked over at his men questioningly. "Oh, is that it?" he said, directing his remark at Tingaling's black back. "Is that it?" and he fumbled in his pockets, produced a toothpick, and began digging away at a back tooth. "You ain't kiddin', are yer?"

"Take her!" Tingaling repeated softly. "Take her!" and he went right on ironing.

Then it was that Tessie herself walked out. She had bitten her lips till they were a bright scarlet and in contrast her black hair seemed blacker than ever, and her white face more startlingly white. She came forward, nonchalant, even smiling.

"Oh, hello!" she threw airily over at Gyp. "Hello you!" and her gaze went round in a circle to include the others. She knew them well. They were gun toters from the Mackey house bunch.

She walked nearly the full length of the shop, then wheeled about, her red dress as full as a balloon, and came back to face Gyp. "I guess you've come to take me home," she said, addressing herself exclusively to him. "Well, I want to tell you I'm ready to go. I'm ready this minute!" and she looked scornfully and quickly in Tingaling's direction. "Guess I'm tired of this dump!" she drawled, and she dropped the word "dump" heavily, as if it were a clog of earth.

Gyp borrowed another cigaret and lit it, puffing the smoke out in long leisurely waves toward the ceiling. Tessie was quite close to him now. She was coming closer. She was threading her arm through his. He pushed her away, and brushed his sleeve off where her hand had been.

"Not so fast, dearie!" he instructed. "Not so fast!" He was slightly dramatic for the benefit of his pals.

"What do you mean?" demanded Tessie, and she stood stiff.

"I'm not so sure I want you now!" he answered dryly, contemplating the end of his lighted cigaret. He flipped the ash upon the floor. "Not so sure I want you after you been with a chink!" he finished and looked at Tessie in a bored manner.

"But I wasn't!" she cried breathlessly. "Was I, Tingaling?"

Tingaling said nothing. He merely picked up another shirt, examined it, and began to iron the cuffs.

"Was I, Tingaling?" she cried, and ran over to pluck at his black sleeve. "Tell him I wasn't. Tell him I wasn't!" There was a pitiful entreaty in her voice now.

Still Tingaling said nothing.

A FLAT silence stole into the tiny shop. Only the iron went clank, as it climbed upon its pedestal and sat there briefly. Tingaling continued to smooth out ruffled shirt fronts and crumpled sleeves.

Tessie began to sob softly. She had no handkerchief so she let the tears fall openly where all could see them. Now and then she brushed a cheek with the back of her hand, angry with herself for crying but unashamed.

The silence that Tingaling spun grew hard. A dull knife could not cut it. If Tingaling would say something. If Gyp would only say something, Tessie thought. She couldn't. Men were beasts, beasts, beasts, she was-saying to herself over and over.

Finally Gyp spoke. "Let's clear outa

If You Want to Make $100 a week and get a Hudson Coach this is your chance

If you want to make $100 a week *write to me at once.* You won't have to invest a cent of capital. You don't need experience. Your earnings will start *immediately.* You can clear from $10 to $20 a day your *very first days.* You can enjoy an income of $5000 a year for the easiest work you ever did. And in addition to this *big money* you can get a new Hudson Super-Six Coach absolutely FREE.

Look At These Big Earnings

Here are a few plain facts. Joseph Williams, of Texas, made $26 in a single day by devoting only a few hours to this pleasant work. R. L. Marshall, of New Jersey, has cleaned up $80 in five hours' time. H. T. Pearl, of Oklahoma, made a net clear profit of $750 in one month. And *right now* I am offering you a chance to make this big money for yourself.

I need 500 men and women to represent us in some of our richest territories. I want men and women who know a real proposition when they see it; who are ambitious to make *big money;* who would like to become the most successful person in their community. If you act *quick,* this wonderful opportunity is yours. Then, if you will simply follow a few instructions you will find it easy to make $100 a week, or even more.

Amazing Profits Waiting For You

We are the largest and most successful company of our kind in the world. We have been in business for eighteen years. Our resources are over a million dollars. Our products—"Zanol" Products—are advertised in such big national magazines as The Saturday Evening Post, The Ladies' Home Journal, Woman's Home Companion and McCall's. We have hundreds of thousands of customers in every part of the country. During the past twelve months these customers bought millions of dollars worth of "Zanol" Products from us.

Get Your Share Of Two Million Dollars

But "Zanol" Products are *never* sold in stores. Instead we appoint an authorized representative in every community—to represent us and handle all of our business with our customers. For doing this easy, pleasant, dignified work, our representatives made over a million and a half dollars last year. This year they will make two million dollars.

Hudson Super-Six Coach Free!

We want you to realize that this is a high-grade proposition. We want to help you in every way to make large profits and we offer to provide a brand-new Hudson Super-Six Coach without any expense to you whatever. The car is given to you outright and becomes your personal, permanent property. Just write for our proposition. Mail the coupon for details of the plan that will give you this automobile without expense and an income of $100 a week.

And if you will accept my offer *now* you can begin to get *your* share of these tremendous profits. I will give you an exclusive territory. I will help you get every dollar's worth of business from your territory. I will protect your interests so that you, and you alone, will get *all* of the profits.

Your Earnings Start Immediately

You can begin to enjoy a big income immediately. I furnish you with a complete equipment for doing business, absolutely FREE. I tell you exactly what to do. I tell you where to go and what to say, how to make money. T. R. Anders, of Pa., made $15 his first day. Albert Peters earned $20 in 3 hours, and $75 his first week. Glenn Kiser, of Va., ended his first day with a profit of $16.68. Christopher Vaughn netted $125 in one week. And there isn't a reason in the world why you can't do as well or better than any of these representatives.

All we ask you to do is introduce yourself as the "Zanol" Representative in your locality. The rest is easy. Your income will increase by leaps and bounds. You will be astounded at the way the money will come rolling in. You will be amazed to find that in a short time you will have an income of $100 a week—over $5,000 a year.

Get The Facts Today

Just send me your name and I will tell you how to get started in this wonderful, money-making business. I will give you all the details. I will show you how you can make $100 a week, and even in your spare time $8 to $10 a day for a few hours' work. I will show you how you can earn $47 in a single day, as Henry Albers did. I will show you how you can duplicate John Scotti's record of $97 clear profit his second week. I will show you how you can add $50 a week to your income in spare time just as Mrs. K. R. Roof has done. And I will show you how you can get a new Hudson Super-Six Coach entirely FREE.

Send No Money

I don't want you to send me a cent. You risk nothing. You do not have to agree to pay anything or do anything. Let me tell you about this marvelous opportunity. Let me *prove* to you that you can make $100 a week without working half as hard as you are right now. Mail the coupon today. Get started in this fascinating work. Don't wait until someone else gets in ahead of you. Make up your mind *now* that you are going to get *your* share of the two million dollars profits which my representatives are going to make this year. Write today.

THE AMERICAN PRODUCTS CO.,

Albert Mills

President and General Manager

Dept. 5398 Cincinnati, Ohio.

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$47 In One Day

Henry Albers had worked at many different things, all without success. As a "Zanol" Representative he has made $47 profit in ONE DAY—more than he ever earned in a week.

$8 An Hour

Henry Grossbaus says, "I have made as high as $8 an hour. The repeat orders are very good. I find it easy to make more in an hour than I thought I could earn in a day."

Cleared $210 In First Two Weeks

That is the record of Edgar Morris. Since then he has built up a big, steady business that has made him independent.

Mail this NOW

Albert Mills, Pres., The American Products Co., Dept. 5398 Cincinnati, O.

I want to know how I can earn $100 a week as a "Zanol" Representative. Send me all the facts about your money-making proposition, without cost or obligation.

Name.....

Address.....

.....

here!" he said, throwing his cigaret stub on the floor, and crushing it with the flat of his yellow heel. He led the way to the door, easy and confident and careless. He didn't look at Tingaling, and only briefly over at Tessie—an insulting look, a look that said plainly: "You're worse than the worst woman in the streets, and I'm through with you!"

Tessie hated him for that look, but she would have gone with him if he had so much as wiggled his thumb for her. She would have gone rather than to stay with Tingaling, because Tingaling, well, Tingaling——

THE door tinkled shut behind them. Tessie sank down upon a bag of damp clothes. Tingaling continued ironing for a moment, then he turned off the gas light, peered out of the gray window, and pattered up to Tessie.

"I didn't mean any of that," he said softly. "You know that I didn't, don't you?" and he put the palm of one hand on the back of the other.

For several seconds, there was a silence. Then: "Didn't you? Didn't you really?" she sobbed.

Tingaling dropped to his black knees. "Ah no, white lady, little white lady," he told her in a whisper, stroking her hand where it had dropped on her rumpled red skirt. "It was the only way to make him not want you, for me not to want you either! Don't you understand that?"

Tessie lifted her face, her thin white face with its halo of black hair. She saw him kneeling there, a thin man with such a kind pair of eyes! The shop was a peaceful place now. No washing, no ironing, no customers in it. Just the two of them alone, with the gray windows growing grayer in the approaching twilight, and soft footsteps on the walk outside hurrying past.

The girl began to laugh, a quick gay laugh. She had already forgotten that she had so much as cried, that only a few minutes before Gyp the Dandy had been there. She thought only of how happy she was now. "You fooled them, didn't you?" and she threw her head back. "My but you're smart. Nobody's ever fooled Gyp before!" and she thrust out her finger at him. "Kiss it, please kiss it, won't you?" she said, sobbing and laughing all at once.

Tingaling bent over the finger, but dropped it quickly. A shadow darkened the door, and the bell sounded. But it was only Bill Templeton, the sailorman, bringing a clean wholesome wind with him. Tingaling rose gracefully to his feet, braiding his hands together to the elbow in the characteristic oriental manner. He smiled a welcome at his guest, then looked down at Tessie.

"Go wash your face!" he said, "and come back!" and he helped Tessie to her feet.

Tessie went out, first looking at the tall sailor, with a shy, apologetic smile.

"This is the first chance I've had to come over!" Bill said, and grinned. "Been busy down on South Street getting ready for the next cruise. Whew!" and he whistled. "I never come into port before it's time to shove off again!"

Tingaling nodded sympathetically. "I know how it is!" he said softly. "But I guess when you touch solid ground you wish for the sea under your feet again, no?"

Templeton took a minute to reply. Meanwhile he grinned widely. "Oh some day I expect to settle down and raise a family. I always wanted——" He tossed the rest of his sentence overboard and leaned over Tingaling to whisper: "Say, tell me about the jane?"

Tingaling closed and opened his almond eyes before replying. "You've known me for some years," he parried. "Have I ever——"

"No," Templeton interrupted him. "I spoke without thinking. Say, you speak pretty good English when you want to!" he added laughing, and searched until he found his cotton bag of tobacco and his round, brown pipe and a match.

"Indeed!" remarked Tingaling deferentially. "It is only when I have something to speak about that matters," he explained, crossing the sleeves of the shirt he was ironing at the back. "Such as I have now." And he turned the light in his iron low, and faced the sailor.

The sailor took a long puff of his pipe. He had his elbow on his knee, his chin on his elbow, and his black, flat shoes spread wide apart upon the yellow floor. In his blue eyes there was no gravity to speak of. When he had things to do he grinned. When he had nothing to do he grinned. He was grinning now.

"I want you to do me a favor!" Tingaling continued. "I shall make it worth your while. It's for the girl—a good girl." And he nodded in the direction of the inner room. "I like her. You'll like her too!"

"As much as I've seen suits me!" said the visitor throatily.

"You see," Tingaling went on, "in China, no matter how big a boy is—I should say, no matter how old a man is—he cannot marry unless his illustrious mother consents to the match. Refusal is not in his power. If the family says yes, it is yes; if they say no, it is no." Tingaling's voice was sad. He looked out of the gray window for a moment, then he brought his brown eyes back to the sailor's blue ones. "I wish to marry Tessie. So I am going home to ask for my mother's yes. I shall sell the shop tomorrow," he went on hurriedly, suddenly remembering that Tessie would soon be in, "and give you the money for the girl. I want you to take her home to your sister's house!"

"I'm sure Gerdy'll be glad to have her!" said the sailor, grinning.

Tingaling gathered all his breath together. There was still something more important than anything he had said so far. He heard the knob of the inner door, and said it quickly as if it hurt him to send out the words.

"If—if——" for a moment he could not go on. When he did, his voice was unemotional. "It may be that Tessie will like you, and you will like Tessie. It may be that my illustrious family will prevent my returning for her——" Tingaling never finished that sentence. But his meaning was not obscure to Templeton.

A moment later Tessie stood in the doorway patting her red poppy into place, smoothing down the pleats of her red dress. Her smile, touched with self-consciousness, the sailor's look of admiration—Tingaling was not blind to the meaning of these things.

"Say!" suggested Templeton tempestuously, breaking the silence, "let's all go down to the movies!"

"Oh, let's go. Do let's go!" Tessie began clapping her hands together at Tingaling. There was nothing to be afraid of any more.

Tingaling looked at her as she sat swinging her legs on the edge of his wooden counter. He had seen her happy in his small domain, but not as she was now happy. It showed quite plainly, this new happiness did, at the corners of her laughing red lips, in the shining depths of her black eyes. Tingaling looked under his lashes at the sailor in blue, sitting on the counter beside her. Templeton's grin was even wider than usual.

Suddenly Tingaling felt paternal toward these two children. He looked down at himself, at his dull, black trousers—thin, drab—at his wrinkled yellow hand on the handle of the idle iron. And he sighed.

"You go!" he said finally. "I can't! Big wash! Big wash!" He had somehow subsided into broken English again.

"Oh, *no*, Tingaling," said Tessie. "We won't go without you.

Tingaling pointed in the direction of the hogshead full to overflowing with sprinkled clothes. "You go like a good girl," he advised, "with my good friend Bill. Tomorrow, I move, Tessie. I go back to live in China." And at the startled question in Tessie's eyes, Tingaling told her about his arrangement for her to live with Bill's sister.

While he spoke, his eyes on his ironing, Tessie made no move. When he had finished, however, she jumped off the counter and stood at his elbow for a long moment, watching the brisk little iron go up and down, up and down.

Templeton found the silence irksome. "Let's get out of here!" he said.

"All right!" Tessie replied after a while, and slowly turned to go.

TINGALING showed them to the door. His forehead semed more like amber than ever. "Have a good time!" he said, and fumbled with Tessie's hand when she gave it to him.

"May I kiss the little finger?" he asked whimsically.

Tessie gave him her lips instead.

"Good-bye, Tingaling," she said softly.

Templeton, looking on, lost his grin for a brief instant. "Come on. Let's go!" he reiterated finally.

Tingaling watched their departure from the gray, unwashed shop window and when they passed out of sight there were tears in the earth-brown eyes.

Then he drew forth from his jacket the letter, and opened it. It was an order from his illustrious mother, the head of his house, to return to China and marry Lily Moon to whom she had betrothed him a great many years before.

"Oh well!" he soliloquized, "one's cup of happiness is as full or as empty!" And with that he shut the door softly, and came back into the lonely shop.

Where the Jazz Begins

—Continued from page 27

disgruntled youth to realize that she had irreverently told him she preferred motoring in a Lincoln.

It is still being called "necking" generally, but another term is coming into some use: "parking."

Facetious souls, strolling around a country club lawn between dances, or passing a car drawn to the side of a lonely road, take great delight in calling out this warning:

"Parking limit—thirty minutes!"

This was overheard in the lobby of the Bellevue-Stratford, which would indicate that Philadelphia isn't so slow as time-honored reputation would make it.

"What's your new apartment like?" asked one young lady.

"The usual kind. Two rooms, kitchenette and cocktail shaker."

Philadelphia's sleepiness is as mythical as Hollywood's flesh-pots. Both are products of newspaper labeling.

In Philadelphia on a Saturday evening not long before summer really set in, we were introduced to a supper club which did not begin to function until midnight. It was in a delightful old house—the fittings were exquisite, the music thrilling.

At tables about were youthful wearers of the names that make up society columns. In no other city would you be likely to get such a gathering in one place. Youth had an extraordinary predominance. Men and women going into their thirties were rare.

The orchestra continued playing until after five o'clock on Sunday morning. The place was still crowded at the end; almost uncomfortably so. When the music stopped at last, the parties began to wander into the gray of the dawn.

"Let's go to Sunday school," one girl suggested.

Our guide—a native Philadelphian—translated by informing us that there was another club towards the outskirts of town which kept going for several hours more on Sunday morning.

"Sunday school" was the facetious name applied to it by its patrons.

The "professional hostess" idea in public dancing places, which began in New York about five years ago, is an old story to most of our big cities by this time.

An unaccompanied young man, by buying a strip of tickets, may dance with any disengaged "hostess," provided, of course, he behaves himself reasonably well. He surrenders a coupon for each dance.

The girls are paid anywhere from five to ten cents for each dance, depending on what the management is able to charge originally.

At the lowest rate a "hostess" would have to survive one hundred dances in an evening to earn five dollars. Not an easy road to riches, it would seem.

"Some of the fellows tip, though," the girls will tell you. "But not for dancin'. Mostly they tip us for sittin' out dances. Funny, isn't it?"

EASY NOW TO GET

A PERFECT MARCEL While You Dress or Sleep!

Marvelous New Invention Gives Beautiful Professional-Like Wave Without Muss, Bother or Expense.

NOW in a few minutes' time any woman can give herself a Perfect Marcel. All Milady has to do is place in her hair a *Ready-Set Marceller* which immediately conforms the hair into a series of beautiful waves similar to those given by the most experienced of beauty specialists. It's no trick to put it in. The illustrations show how neat it looks in the hair while in use and what a beautiful wave it gives to perfectly straight hair.

The READY-SET **Marceller** Can't Go Wrong

Regardless of what texture hair you have, the *Ready-Set Marceller* never fails. It will delight you. It comes in two parts. One for the side of the head as shown in illustration. The other for the opposite side and back. It is adjustable for those who prefer the back shingle bob with sides waved. The secret of the *Ready-Set* is the folding crossbar which "automatically" puts each one of the flexible combs in the hair at the proper angle flat to the head and in the proper place to give a perfect marcel. The crossbar works bellows fashion. When you close up the crossbar the hair [which should be dampened] works up between the combs forming beautiful waves.

The *Ready-Set* must not be confused with cloth waving caps—hot oil—hot irons—or intricate adjustment of combs. It is automatic, self-waving, self-adjusted silver-like waver with flexible special made combs. It weighs but a few ounces; comfortable to put on; nothing to get out of order; produces an automatically perfect marcel.

Any woman who has lost time and patience with so-called home wavers is invited to try the *Ready-Set* entirely at our risk and expense to demonstrate that it is based on an entirely new and different principle.

Your mirror tells the story! By the time you are dressed, your hair is beautifully done! Or put it on at night—you'll never notice it—and in the morning you look as if you had just stepped from the beauty shop.

Note: For re-setting permanents there is nothing better or more economical than *Ready-Set*. If you have a permanent you need one. Ideal for retracing. For those with naturally curly hair who use the Finger wave, the *Ready-Set* will delight you. It is a way to safely marcel white hair. It gives the perfect wave to any type of hair.

These Pictures Tell the Story!

1—Straight Undressed Hair. 2—The Ready-Set Slipped Over the Hair in 3 Seconds. 3—The Result—A Beautiful Toilet Everytime!

Miss Ray Morse, well known beauty specialist, says: "After seeing the wave any woman can so easily get by simply using the *Ready-Set Marceller*, I would be selfish if I did not admit that it will save American women thousands of dollars formerly spent with beauty parlors.

Send No Money

We want you to be convinced the *Ready-Set* will give satisfaction. Later we plan to sell through stores, and we want your good will. We are offering a special introductory price to women who make this test. Send in the coupon today for a 5-day trial of the *Ready-Set Marceller*.

THE READY-SET MARCELLER CO.
1031 Colonial Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

Please send me your *Ready-Set Marceller*. I agree to deposit $2.97 (plus postage) with the postman upon delivery. If I am not satisfied with results in every way I will return outfit within five days and you are to refund the purchase price.

Name.....

Address.....

City.....*State*.....

NOTE: If you expect to be out when the postman calls, enclose $3. with order and the *Ready-Set Marceller* will be sent postpaid.

Cash must accompany all orders outside of United States.

a little tangled in front where beads of sweat had gathered and matted it at tennis. Hers was an expressionless face, the mouth quite childish, eyes an honest brown, nose fine. Her neck was rather too thin but met her shoulders with a line like the up-crest of a breaking wave. An excellent figure . . . and then Gogo noted her hands. They were little brown paws, like a boy's, the nails bitten and ragged . . .

Once more with that queer uncertain gesture she swayed toward Gogo, and this time he did not move away his shoulder. It was an awkward moment, and Gogo suddenly felt a strong elation. Here was one game at which she was a tyro! She was a novice at making love, just as Gogo was a novice at golf. Gogo instantly found himself dominant. Here was a situation that he could beat, and she couldn't. And how he hated her!

"Whatcha laughing at," she asked presently.

"Nothing," Gogo answered, with an inward chuckle.

He took one of her paws in his hand experimentally. It was scrubby and a little warm, and it lay quite unresponsive . . . Silly thing, holding hands, thought Gogo presently. So housemaid.

"You know I never told you something I wanted to," said Georgiana.

"What was it?"

"It was about the maid," she said.

Inwardly Gogo flamed. He turned a cold glance upon her.

"I guess I know enough about that," he said, and he felt the same impotent rage that he always felt when he considered that depressing episode.

Then he noted that Georgiana's childish mouth had taken on a queer little wry expression, almost like a baby that is just about to cry. Her free paw—the other rested still in Gogo's hand—fidgeted with the throttle in the center of the driving wheel. There was a kind of dejection, a puzzled drooping about her manner that in spite of himself went to Gogo's heart. She gazed ahead and downward.

"It was a rotten thing to do," she said diffidently at last. Gogo did not answer. Her next words came with a bluntness that must have been agonizing.

"I couldn't help it, Gogo, because I was just crazy."

She looked at him an instant shyly, and the unformed baby mouth worked strangely. Gogo felt his hand clutched tighter just for a second, but Georgiana's emotion found voice in a familiar gesture. She simply leaned her shoulder again to Gogo's and pressed it there.

"You see," she said, "I liked you, Gogo, and I——"

She couldn't find the words.

"It—it just made me crazy," she repeated in the silly formula of youth, "to see you in there kissing Jeannette."

The best thing Gogo could think of doing at the moment was the awkward thing of putting his arm about her shoulder in the pose of a cabinet group. She started suddenly.

"Hot damn!" she cried. "We'll miss the train!"

The mood of so short a time ago had vanished, presto! and the competent, assured youngster of the age was busy at the starter, the throttle, the gears. The car swung round on its tail and was off down the road, making fifty an hour.

They slewed into the station plaza just as the train arrived, and Gogo dutifully went to meet his mother. As he plodded away from the automobile a young whirlwind approached it. The young whirlwind was garbed in a slouchy hat pulled over his brows, and a blue-gray suit the trousers of which, wrinkling elegantly about his brogans, were wide enough to fit a bull elephant.

"Hi, Georgy!" Gogo heard the young whirlwind shout. "You can't tie the Shanahans—it's me!"

Georgiana emitted a throaty yell.

"Spike Shanahan himself!" she cried. "Here comes nothin'."

Gogo got out of hearing. The ebullience that possessed Georgiana and all her friends somehow horrified him. In the face of it he was dumb, wooden. There was something terrible in their assurance and self-sufficiency, and beside that they spoke a language he hardly understood and which he could never utter . . .

"Do watch where you're going, Gogo, you almost ran over me." His mother's voice sounded in his ear. Mrs. Humphrey pecked her son briskly on the cheek. "And take your hat off when you kiss me," she said. "I'm your mother."

Gogo picked up the baggage. Mrs. Humphrey was in the frenzied state that riding in trains always produced.

"A wretched, abominable train," she shouted over her shoulder at Gogo as she swept firmly along. "The cinders were as big as bricks. I'd just as soon ride behind a brontosaurus . . ." She exhaled loudly.

Gogo steered his mother toward the waiting car. Spike Shanahan, who had seated himself in front beside Georgiana, jumped down and began bowing from the waist like an automaton as he swung the tonneau door open. Mrs. Humphrey greeted Georgiana with a succession of little pats on the arm.

"Dear child," she said. "How are you? How fine you look—so adorably *farouche*—such color—I know I'm a train ahead of time but I simply couldn't wait to see you and your dear mother."

Georgiana omitted saying that Mrs. Humphrey was really a train behind time, and she presented Mr. Spike Shanahan. That young man bowed more automatically than ever, and at the depth of the bow extended his arm horizontally ahead as if he were shaking hands with Mrs. Humphrey across the edge of a ditch six feet wide and had to watch his footing at the same time.

Mrs. Humphrey and Gogo bundled into the back seat. They instantly failed to exist for the couple in front. Those two burst into a flood of badinage that Gogo couldn't even follow.

"Gonna put your lovin' on for me, Georgy," demanded Mr. Spike Shanahan, stertorously. Georgiana looked at him in humorous contempt and laughed.

"You think you're the gnat's anklet, don't you?" she responded.

"You can't tie me," bellowed Mr. Spike Shanahan.

"Who would?" caroled Georgiana. "I roll my own."

The conversation sounded like a litany in a foreign tongue.

"You what?" cried Mr. Spike Shanahan.

"I roll my own," iterated Georgiana. This seemed to convulse Mr. Shanahan and it also filled him with railing disbelief.

"Tripe for the monkeys," he shouted in the mysterious ritual, and Georgiana's response came back like that of some transported priestess.

"Sardines for the seals," she cried, the phrase bursting from her as if fraught with apocalyptic significance.

"You can't tie the Shanahans," chanted Mr. Shanahan.

"The Shanahans can't tie the Fanchers," Georgiana lilted.

"Hot daddy says they can," intoned Mr. Shanahan.

"Sweet mamma says they can't," came the antiphon.

"Shad roe for the sharks," said Mr. Shanahan.

"Applesauce," said Georgiana, and the two burst into a whoop of laughter . . .

"Shanahan — Shanahan," said Mrs. Humphrey behind her hand to Gogo. "I can't place the name. Is it Aramaic?"

"Hush, mother," responded Gogo nervously.

"It can't—" Mrs. Humphrey pondered, "it can't be the packers, can it?" She brooded an instant. Then she brought her fist down sharply on her thigh, and nodded. "It *is* the packers," she said. "They bought the place dear Mrs. Van-

Valentine Williams

has long been in the thick of things. He has witnessed more than one war as special correspondent to the London Daily Mail. In the World War, as second lieutenant in the Irish Guards, he won the M. C. for gallantry in action.

He is on the spot when something starts and pretty apt to see it through to a finish. It is understandable that he should write a story of how a man's actions—be they for good or bad—overtake him in the end.

His story is THE CONTINUITY GIRL, *and it will be in the September* McCLURE'S.

derhaus found she couldn't stand the air in."

She mounted her lorgnet and fixed it stonily on Mr. Spike Shanahan's sturdy neck. "That must be one of them," she said.

DINNER hadn't been much fun for Gogo. Somehow he had been included in the conversation of Mr. and Mrs. Fancher and his mother, while all around him buzzed and hallooed the extraordinary banter of Georgiana, Sam, Tommy, and Mr. Spike Shanahan. Later he had been enlisted by his elders for bridge and was not dismissed for an hour.

The others had been dancing in the music room—but the strains of the radio had ceased when Gogo went there searching for them. No one was there, and Gogo, slightly despondent and very bored, wandered about the big house. Without taking particular notice, he strolled into the sun-parlor, now dark. The air was heavy with the bondage of plants.

There was a sullen weight on Gogo's mind. His vanity was hurt—and that was a very grave wound indeed with Gogo. A second load on his mind was an old one—the old, old bitterness he was wont to feel at his own self-consciousness and wooden solemnity. Gogo stumbled into the blackness of the conservatory and was very unhappy.

He thought again of Paris . . . In Paris, Madame de Druc-Amys, an exquisite girl who appreciated him—here, a little unmannerly hoyden who snubbed him.

He'd pay her back—no, he wouldn't either. The most dignified thing was to ignore her completely. Continue as he had begun. He reviewed the events of the afternoon with more satisfaction to his self-esteem. Not so bad after all, he decided. She had snubbed him, all right, but she hadn't put anything *over* on him!

Something stirred faintly in the blackness and Gogo jumped when a throaty voice called out his name.

"Gogo," said the voice, and he cried hastily:

"Who is it?"

"It's me," said Georgiana.

Gogo hated to be frightened, and hated still more to appear frightened, so he found himself angrier than ever.

"Who else is here?" he demanded sardonically.

"Ain't nobody—you must be thinking of two other fellows." This with a rather timid bravado. Gogo felt some remorse at his nastiness.

"What are you doing, Georgiana?" said he. He moved toward her.

"Just hanging round," she replied. "Sit down here."

Gogo fumbled his way toward a sofa and put forth his hand to locate it. A small paw reached out to his, and he was drawn to the seat.

"There," said Georgiana, and then, after a pause: "What gave you the willies, old timer?"

Gogo denied emphatically that anything had given him the willies.

"Certainly did have the willies at the breaking of bread," she affirmed. "Didn't seem to be really truly thankful for what you partook . . . Didn't partake of much of anything except cantaloup . . ."

"I wasn't hungry," said Gogo stoutly. Then they were silent.

Presently Georgiana moved closer and once more her firm shoulder came in contact with his.

"Gogo," said she, "you aren't sore at me, are you?"

"No," he replied with a bitter cynical laugh. "Why should I be?"

"I thought maybe you were sore," she began, and paused.

At last she continued: "Because of Spike Shanahan."

Gogo jumped. This girl had no finesse. What right had she to think he was sore because of Spike Shanahan? But he remained silent. After all, the conversation was heading the way he wanted it to.

"He's got a fast line," said Georgiana. "But honestly, Gogo, I never stepped out with Spike . . ."

Gogo took advantage of the darkness to cast upon her a supercilious look. It was intended to convey amazement that she could think it meant anything to him who—in the current phrase—she stepped out with.

Almost imperceptibly they seemed to draw closer together. In a slow moment more, Gogo's arms were about her, and not long afterward, their lips met . . .

Dry, funny little lips, hers, to kiss. She doesn't kiss very well, thinks Gogo. Inanimate.

At that moment there was a succession of swift heel-strokes on the tile flooring. And at the same time the conservatory blazed into brilliant view. All its electrics flashed and focused on the affectionate couple.

AT THE door stood Mrs. Humphrey, one hand elegantly on her bosom, the other retiring from the switch on the panel beside her.

Her eyes were turned on Gogo. To his benumbed and affrighted gaze her bosom heaved like the surge of ocean. Georgiana and he disentangled themselves from one another in a whirlwind of motion, and sat expectant of the thunderbolt, side by side, a little defiant, a little timorous, under the impact of the all-compelling eye.

"Darlings," fluted the dowager Humphrey, "has anybody seen my cigaret case? I can't imagine where I left it!"

Her glazed and absent-minded vision went about the conservatory, ignoring nothing but the sofa on which Gogo and Georgiana sat.

"Demon-activity — demon-activity — that's the only way I can account for losing it. Here one moment, gone the next . . ."

Then she cast a languorous glance at the couple.

"Adorables!" she chanted. "I expect it isn't here—I'll borrow a cigaret from Georgiana's dear mother. Forgive me," she cried, "for intruding—you naughty children, you!"

Mrs. Humphrey, transported, clutched her heart.

"Ah, youth, youth!" she cried in ecstasy. "It will be served."

And she took herself off into the corridor, carefully turning off the lights as she went.

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a night of tossing about and snatching at sleep, to find that the country had gone to war!

Almost before Robert Cameron knew what was happening, he found himself in the gray-green uniform of the marines, one of thousands on a great ship which silently, in the dark, slipped down the harbor. Wedged against the rail, straining his eyes for a last glimpse of the lights of the city, he thought:

"Well, that's over—hope the kid'll have all the luck in the world. No one like her." Shaking himself, he turned away. Something tight inside his chest hurt. "Got to snap out of this," he said to himself. So, as the lights of the harbor receded, he hummed:

"Hail, Hail, the gang's all here.
What the hell do we care! What the
hell do we care!"

Long days at sea—soldiers shooting crap—soldiers talking about the girls they left behind them—"Aw, pipe down! I hear those French dames ain't so dusty." Long nights at sea, lying awake, listening to the hiss of the water racing astern; feeling the throb of the engines like the beating of a heart in the darkness. Then, through the gray mist of the morning, the sight of the low-lying sand-hills of the French coast—and a funny pull at one's heart. Interminable days in box cars with voices from Texas and the East Side grousing at the injustice of "40 *hommes,* 8 *chevaux.*" And then at last the guns! Muttering and growling, always muttering and growling out there beyond the smiling wheat fields with their scarlet flowers.

On a June day sweet with the scents of summer, a day when the skylarks twittered far up in the incredible blue of the French heavens, the Marines went in. To Robert Cameron it was like the fantasies of ether, something you know but never afterwards quite remember or quite forget. Then, an enemy machine-gun nest to be raided—one that for two days had coughed and sputtered and spat death at them—half a dozen men crawling on their bellies through the wheat—"damn these poppies, they tickle my face," thought Cameron—an unbearable fear, and an unbearable exaltation—a rush as his own squad and another to the right closed in pell-mell upon the Germans' flanks—— then he was falling, falling, down to hell, until mercifully the darkness enveloped him . . .

HE CRAWLED up from that darkness, slowly, after months in hospital, to hear the ironic laughter of the gods on the day when he was first allowed to look at himself in a mirror. They had prepared him for it, of course; had joked with him kindly about the new face they were going to give him. But when the doctor casually handed him a mirror Cameron saw his fat friendly nurse turn her head away. She was hard-boiled, but not hard-boiled enough for that.

Cameron had cared little about his looks but when the mirror told its story he would have been more than human if it hadn't mattered a great deal, suddenly. He had wanted to be a romantic actor! That specter in the mirror wanted to be a romantic actor! Only his eyes were recognizable—the rest was not his own face at all!

With a tremendous effort he put the mirror down without dropping it, and forced himself to turn his face, not toward the wall but toward the doctor who held out his hand. Fighting with every ounce of his shattered will, Cameron managed to say:

"You've done a good job, Doc—lucky to have any face at all."

But that night, lying quite still pretending to be asleep, one thought went round and round like a maddening tune in his head:

"A ham—and not even a good-looking ham! What in hell is there left for me?"

IT WAS Joe Levy who answered the question for him, months later in New York. After his first shocked silence at Cameron's appearance, he talked volubly, trying, as he said, to "put some sense into your crazy nut."

"Always told you you'd never make a romantic actor. Now that's out, why don't you go after the other stuff? Look —I'll give you a chance. Go to work with Mike; he'll brush up your dancing. You always could dance. I'll fix up a turn for you in the new revue—saw a stunt in Paris you could do pretty." Levy waxed enthusiastic. "And listen—we won't use your own name—no one'll recognize you. If you make a hit then we'll tell them who you are afterwards. It will make a whale of a newspaper story."

And so it was on the first night of "Broadway to Paris," Joe Levy's new revue, Cameron appeared on the program as "Gerald Browning." Under that name he had rehearsed for weeks. There were two people in the show who had known him in the old days—and neither of them had recognized him. He could hardly believe that the "new face" which the doctor had given him would so completely wipe out the man who had once been called the handsomest man on Broadway. And Cameron, wincing at the prospect of the sensation and the absurd pity he must tolerate when the truth became known, was glad to hide behind his new name.

The opening night! Seven-fifteen, and the dressing-rooms filling up. Laughter, and running back and forth. Chorus girls humming the big song of the show. Excited voices—"Where's that new grease paint!" "Hurry up—you haven't got your mouth on yet." "He's going to sit in the third row right." The familiar theater smells—grease paint and mascaro, and the mingled odor of perfumes. The call boy making his rounds: "Half an hour—half an hour!" echoing down the corridors.

Cameron in his dressing-room put on his make-up carefully. The face of Gerald Browning looked back at him from the mirror; the blue eyes of Robert Cameron burned above it. He jumped up and got into the absurd harlequin costume he was to wear—which, for all its absurdity, could not quite hide the grace of his long, slender body. He had a momentary revulsion. This was no job for a man—going out there before that blasé New York first night audience to do a strange pantomime—— However, gentlemen must live! He pulled on his tight-fitting cap with its long slim feather. He was ready.

"Five minutes! Five minutes!" cried the call boy. The tension was terrific. Then faintly from out front the whining and wailing of instruments tuning. And then the final cry, the old thrilling cry, the call to battle——

"Overture! O-ver-ture!"

HALF an hour from the moment when the immaculate, nervous little conductor lifted his baton and the orchestra crashed into the overture, every one in the company knew the show was a "wow." Backstage the air was electric with excitement. They were riding into the season on the crest of a huge success.

"It goes over right away or it never does," said the tenor, standing beside Cameron in the wings. He laughed excitedly. "It's like love—first sight or nothing. They're eating it up out front. We ought to run a year on Broadway."

Then he saw her. Peering out into the house from his hiding-place near the electrician's board Cameron saw her—Barbara Benson, in the second row, her eyes shining, her lips a little parted in the eager way she had when she was deeply interested. His eyes, starved so long for a sight of her, hurt with the intensity of his concentration. The second row! Would she recognize him? He was shaking, as if from a chill, as he turned away.

He had no more time to think. The comedian, coming off, was brushing by him. He heard the electrician whisper: "Lights!"

The stage was plunged in darkness. Down came the black drop. Again the whisper: "Lights." And in the white spot, as a single muted violin took up its song, he sprang in a long arc before the curtain, a tall slender figure, inimitably graceful. Fleetingly he was conscious of a patch of white out there in the second row. And then, the audience entirely lost to him, he began to "do his stuff."

And how he did it! Into that delicate, humorous bit of pantomime, into that grotesque dance, went everything that was in him—grief and yearning, lost hopes, vain desires, remembrance, regret, and above all, courage—all translated into humor, which rightly has been called the tears of a brave man.

He was comic, because he would not let himself be tragic. He gave them laughter, the rarest gift of the gods, because in the black hours of his own soul he had known unshed tears. It was all the more perfect because he was not the usual figure of comedy. The harlequin you saw up there in the fierce white light had caught the spirit of Pan—Pan, lyric, eternally young, playing the clown on a blue windy morning, on a sunny mountain top when the world was young. And in

some strange way he gave you, too, that feeling of pathos which all young, absurd creatures give you—a puppy chasing the butterfly which you know he will never catch.

When the orchestra very softly began that weird little tune, and he went into his dance, the very shadow on the blanched back drop behind him capered in an ecstasy of mirth that was close to tears.

He slipped off at the end with one last, perfect caper, leaving a house which crashed into applause. It roared in his ears as he made for the sanctuary of his dressing-room—he wanted to get away, get away before the terror that she would recognize him overwhelmed him. Levy, deserting his post out front for a moment, came galloping in, fat and shining in his dress clothes, perspiring, beaming, his hat on one ear. He grabbed Cameron's hand and slapped him on the back.

"I told you so—you're a wow, boy—you're there! Macy of the Globe, and that chap on the Bulletin—and all the others want to know who you are! Can you beat it? I didn't tell them—we'll save it. You'll be the talk of the town."

He saw that Cameron was trembling and his face grew solicitous.

"You're all in, kid—cut the finale, and beat it. Go home and go to bed—you'll wake up and find yourself famous."

Out front in the second row a girl whose name was now written in electric bulbs stumbled over three pairs of protesting feet, and hurried up the aisle to find Joe Levy. She caught him as he reached the back of the house.

"Oh, Joe," she said, "why didn't you tell me? Of course I knew him—his shoulders—his walk—his beautiful hands. Do you think I'd forget him when I loved him so? Of course I loved him—I was a fool ever to let him go away. I've been so miserable. I want to see him, Joe. Take me back. Oh, Joe, his poor face. Is it very bad?"

Levy took both her hands into his own.

"Listen, Barbara, you got to pull yourself together, girlie. His face ain't so bad as he thinks. He's kind of hipped on it, that's all. Thinks he's such a fright that it hurts people to look at him. Funny, the break he got. He always hated his good looks—now he's gone to the other extreme. You'll have to be careful. Try to act as if you didn't think he'd changed much."

"Just take me to him, Joe. I'll know how to act when I see him."

She knocked at his dressing-room, heard a muffled "Come in," and opening the door saw him stretched out on the couch, his head buried in a pillow. As she touched his hand he sat up and looked at her for an anguished moment—then mechanically he put up a hand to cover his face.

She had a wild desire to scream with pity at that gesture but controlled herself, and taking his hand gently away from his face she bent over him and touched his cheek lightly with her lips.

He was terrified that she would pity him—at first he was not brave enough to meet her eyes. But when at last he turned his eyes to hers he saw—not pity, but love there—the thing that he had never hoped to see. Blindly he reached out for her, and her strong young arms went around him with a fierce, passionate tenderness as if she wished to hold him away from all that hurt him. With a broken word that was like a sob, he buried his face against her breast.

And as she held him close from outside the dressing-room came the booming of the drums, the hoarse laughter of the saxophones, the sweet wail of the violins, the fresh young voices of the chorus in the last crash and swing of the finale—the old, ever new sounds of the theater where that night, marvelously, he had come into his own.

If There Must Be Romance—Continued from page 31

flock here. You could build a dancing pavilion, install a few more attractions, and the place'll be a gold mine."

"H'm," said Joe Leyn, noncommittally.

Mr. Framm broke into further recommendations.

"You could make this place a second Coney Island. You know what the whole Jersey coast is in for. A boom! Ten years and it'll be filled with resorts from north to south! Get in now, Mr. Leyn. This is a good thing!"

Joe Leyn nodded. But he wasn't listening to Mr. Framm. He wasn't listening to anything that pertained to the making of money. All of a sudden thirty years had fallen from him and he was a small boy running wild in a marvellous place—a place filled with great thrills and great terrors. He stopped outside the shoot-the-chutes, a childish impulse strong upon him. He turned to Mr. Framm.

"Tell you what," he said, "I want to go over this place by myself—get my own impressions. I'll just spend an hour or two here sort of—sort of looking around. Don't you wait for me. I'll get back to the city myself. I like to make my own decisions my own way. Come in to see me, say—well—four, five days from now and I'll have an answer for you."

Mr. Framm looked dubious. He liked to be on the spot with a prospect. But these moneyed men had their whims, and he had learned from bitter experience that it was best not to cross them.

"Just as you say, Mr. Leyn," he agreed with forced cheerfulness. "Look over the place any way you wish."

Joe Leyn watched until he was well out of sight. Then he approached the ticket booth outside the shoot-the-chutes, and shoved a dollar bill through the cubby hole.

"Six," he said.

With the strip of tickets in his hand he went and took his place in a long line waiting to pile into the barges as they emptied. A girl stood in front of him, a youthfully slim girl who came about up to his chin. All he could see of her was her back. Under one arm she carried some books and a red tin lunch box, all held together with a narrow strap. As

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an empty barge came up she got into the seat next to his, and dropping her books between her feet, prepared to hold herself fast by gripping the hand-rail with tight fingers.

"All off!" shouted the guard with the gusto of one announcing a trip to the moon. "There she goes! Shoot-the-chutes! Whewwwweee!"

The barge rattled off, bounced around a track, jerked itself up a steep incline, higher, higher, higher; stood a breathless moment perched at the top, and then shot down a chute like flying wind, striking the water below a smart blow that sent it spattering into the air like a fountain.

Joe Leyn laughed aloud—roared rather—though for one instant his breath had gagged in his throat. The girl beside him shrieked with terror and joy mingling at once in her voice. The motion of the barge threw her against him, and she clutched at his arm with grabbing fingers. Swiftly he put an arm about her and held her steady.

"Sit tight!" he cautioned.

The boat swerved sharply about and at the same moment a jolt against the landing platform carried off the girl's hat, already loosened by the rush of air.

"My hat!" she shrieked. "Oh! My hat!"

"Wait a minute!" shouted a guard. The boat glided to a halt. The guard seized a long, hooked pole and fished for the hat.

"There she is!" he cried, and delivered it dripping water.

The girl took it gingerly between her fingers as they got out. Her face was rueful.

"What a price to pay for a ride on the shoot-the-chutes!" she said mournfully. Suddenly she saw Joe Leyn watching her and smiled up into his eyes. She had an amazingly beautiful face. It was a young face, framed in an aureole of chestnut hair, with eyes the color of purple pansies, and a little, wistful mouth. Joe Leyn felt like a man struck by lightning.

"But I'd do it again!" she announced. "That one minute up there, poised like a bird! Wasn't it wonderful?"

"Wonderful!" agreed Joe Leyn.

"You held me, didn't you?" She looked up at him confidingly.

"Do you want to go on again?" asked Joe. "I bought six tickets. I've got five left."

"Oh let's!" she cried.

They ran around to the front where the barges came in. Hand in hand they scrambled into one of the seats. This time the books were tucked under Joe Leyn's arm.

"Now!" he said, as the barge began to move off. "I'll just hold you in place." And he put his arm firmly about her slight, soft waist.

"All off!" shouted the guard. "There she goes! Whewwweee!"

When they returned from the second trip they were attracted by a gypsy tent that flanked the shoot-the-chutes. In front of it a man with a yellow girdle and a multi-colored bandanna exhorted the crowd with glowing eloquence.

"Have your fortune told! Zara, the Queen of the Gypsies, will tell you who you will marry, who are your friends, who your enemies! Do you want to know if you will be rich? Ask Zara! She knows! Her power is supernatural! She sees into the future! She can guide you to happiness! Step up, ladies and gentlemen! Get your tickets! Twenty-five cents to know what life holds for you!"

Out of the corner of his eye Joe Leyn looked at the girl standing next to him and saw that her lips were parted and her face alive with anticipation.

"Shall we?" he asked.

She clapped her hands ecstatically.

"What a lark! I love to have my fortune told! They never say the same thing twice!"

She went in first and stayed barely two minutes. When she emerged from between the flaps of the tent her face was wreathed in merriment.

"What did she tell you?" he asked.

"Oh my! Wait! Your turn now! We'll swap when you come out."

He went in. A mountainous gypsy, swarthy of skin, with great earrings dangling from the lobes of her ears and a network of beads depending from her neck, handed him a pack of cards, told him to cut it and began laying the cards in semi-circles on her table. Upon two cards she pounded with a dirty forefinger.

"Two ledies, gentleman. One—light. One—dark. One—reech. One—poor. Marry the poor one."

She waved him out.

"Well?" cried the girl.

He drew a long face. "She says marry the poor girl!"

"Glory! Isn't she superb? She told me a millionaire would cross the path of my life. But I wouldn't marry him. He would slip from my fingers like water. Can you see me? Letting a millionaire get away?"

"Wouldn't you?"

"I should say not! I'd hold on to him if he was as slippery as an eel! A millionaire! Oh! How I could use one!"

"The millionaire or the millions?"

"Both. But mostly the millions."

"And what would you do with them if you had them?"

"Buy a frankfurter and roll first! I'm starving!"

He tucked her arm through his. "Come along. I'm that much of a millionaire anyway."

THEY had two apiece, running over with burning mustard. Over the second one Joe Leyn picked up the thread of his questioning.

"And after you'd bought the frankfurter and roll? What then? What would you do then?"

"Then?" She stretched up her arms in a gesture that took in the sky now darkening above them. "Oh, then I'd buy the world! A yacht that would go flying to the South Seas with me. Flowers by the tons! What I could do with millions! Baths in milk and showers of perfume!"

"So," said Joe Leyn. "Baths in milk and showers of perfume!"

They came to a booth where dolls with great staring blue eyes and nests of golden hair stood side by side on long shelves. Bold dolls they were, openly flirting, fat of tummy and chubby of knee.

"Here y' are! Here y' are! Win a kewpie! Take one home to the wife and babies! Blue eyes, golden hair, pink cheeks, red lips! Five-dollar dolls! Hit the moving ducks! Three shots for a dime! Two outta three and you take your choice! Any doll on the shelf! Step up, gents! Come on, ladies! Show your skill!"

Joe Leyn's eyes crossed the girl's.

"Try your luck?"

"Any time!"

He bought a handful of tickets. The booth-keeper handed him one rifle, the girl another. They took aim and shot. Whizz! Cling! Zap! The ducks sailed on. Baff! He nailed one. Zip! Pinn-ng! He shouted, "Oh boy!" as he hadn't shouted in years. He pushed his hat back and a lock of his hair slightly tipped with silver crept down over his forehead. He wiped his moist face with an initialed handkerchief. The girl shrieked with every aim, "Oh! Oh! Oh!"

Joe Leyn bought more tickets. He meant to get a doll if it took him all night. After twenty minutes of shooting he suddenly hit three ducks in succession.

"Attaboy!" cheered the booth-keeper, for he had found Joe a very profitable customer. "Persistence wins! Choose your doll, sir! Any one on the shelf. Any one in the house!"

Joe Leyn turned to the girl, flushed and laughing at his side.

"Which?" he asked.

She pointed. "The one with the blue net dress."

"Well!" breathed Joe Leyn. "What now?" He was walking with one of the girl's arms clasped in his. Other couples jostled and milled about them, but he felt no resentment at being pushed and jabbed. He was wandering with other thrill-seekers in a land of joy. A girl was at his side—a girl he had never seen before this night. Just like a puff of wind she had blown across his path. He had come out to see an amusement park. And he had found romance!

"What now?" he asked. "How about a drink?"—they passed a lemonade stand.

"It wouldn't revolt me!" she agreed.

She was sipping hers with dainty, sucking motions of her lips, when she suddenly put her glass down and stared past Joe with eyes into which fright had leaped.

"Oh my!" she gasped. "Oh my! There's Bert!"

"Who?"—looking puzzled.

"Bert! I ran away from him. He wouldn't go on anything! He said he couldn't afford to spend his money on—on foolishness."

A young man had approached them, a boy rather, in whose white face a pair of eyes burned with misery and anger. He ignored Joe Leyn entirely, and grasped the girl's arm.

"So you did do it! You did! Ran off and acted like a cheap little flirt for a few minutes of hokum!" His lips trembled and his face worked pathetically. "Picked up a man just like an—an ordinary—a common—common—" His eyes swept her from head to foot with scorn. "I spend everything I make on you! Everything! And just because once—*once*—I couldn't give you what you wanted—Oh! I wish—I wish——"

Abruptly he turned on his heel and hurried away.

A minute the girl stood and stared after

him. Then her eyes flashed to Joe, waiting with his hat under his arm. For the first time she seemed to see the gray in his hair, the creases on his brow. In a swift glance she took him in, and a startled look swept into her eyes. She glanced again in the direction the youth had taken. And with a sudden motion she reached out and grabbed her books from where they were tucked with Joe's hat.

"Good-bye!" she cried. "Good-bye!" And was gone, running like wind, after the youth who but a moment before had upbraided her.

Joe Leyn stood alone, an unfinished glass of lemonade in his hand.

"Tough luck, mister," commented the man behind the counter. 'That's the way they are. Love one feller and fool around with another. I know 'em. The whole pack and kaboodle of 'em!"

It was eleven o'clock when Joe found his way out of the gates of the amusement park. He didn't mind the trip back to New York, for his brain was seething with a jumble of thoughts. On the ferry he stood looking out over the water, seeing the face of the girl in the park; seeing, too, the miserable eyes of the boy who had accused her—"I spend everything on you! Everything! And just because *once*——"

And he had thought he had touched the border of romance? A spark had been kindled between him and this girl, but like a candle in the wind it had sputtered out. And hadn't she been beautiful!

It was long past midnight when he entered his apartment and found his man waiting up for him with a message.

"Your brother called, sir. Said no matter what time you arrived you were to phone him. Said it was most important."

Joe consulted his watch.

"Almost one," he said frowning. What could Hermann want with him at this time of the night?

"All right. Get the number."

Hermann was on the phone immediately.

"Say Joe!" He fairly bellowed into the mouthpiece. "Say Joe! Where you been? Trying to get you all night! Terrible thing happened! Terrible! Old man Harris committed suicide!"

"My God!"

Hermann raced on across the wire, spilling words into his ear.

"Happened at ten o'clock. Said goodnight to Paula and started up to bed. First thing you know she heard a shot and— Seems he'd been dabbling around with money that wasn't his and lost a good deal of it. Paula's gone to pieces. Bessie's with her now. She chased over soon's she— Say Joe! You ought to go over there. They need a man around the place. The reporters alone——"

"Oh! I'll go over! I'll go right over!"

It was then that he remembered he had intended to see Paula that evening. All those hours in the amusement park he hadn't thought of it once. Why! He was engaged to Paula! It was that very afternoon that he had given her the pearls and the ring.

He found the Harris home ablaze with lights. In the street in front of it two policemen stood on duty. At the doorway several reporters were trying to gain entrance. He pushed past them and rang the bell. The Harris butler admitted him at once and motioned him upstairs. In a sitting-room well toward the back of the house he found his sister-in-law, Bessie. She fairly fell upon him. She had been crying and rims of red edged her eyes.

"Oh Joe! Where were you? I had Hermann phoning all over town! Isn't it dreadful? Paula's a wreck. Just gone to pieces. You know what her father meant to her. They've never been away from each other since her mother— I just got her to lie down for a few minutes." She nodded toward an adjoining room. "She thought you might come and she wanted to——"

"Bessie!" The call came from the next room. "Is that Joe?"

"YES." Bessie started quickly away from Joe Leyn, but before she had made two steps, the door opened and Paula stood in the room.

She looked at him out of desolate eyes. An evening gown of black lace indicated that she must have been waiting for him when the tragedy occurred. Her face was free of all make-up and looked strangely soft and young in its unrelieved pallor. Her hair, usually so perfectly ordered, was thrown back from her forehead, as if her hand had run through it many times.

She was a new Paula to Joe. She held her head high, but there was something broken and pitiful about her. He went toward her and tried to take her hand.

"Now, Paula . . ."

"I know. I know." She seemed to sway toward him, but instantly pulled herself erect and said to Bessie, without looking at her: "I want to see Joe alone, Bessie."

Bessie went out of the room.

"Paula—" Joe put his hands upon her shoulders. He felt her tremble under them. "You mustn't take it this way, Paula. I know it's a terrible thing to have happen, but you must not feel as if the world has come to an end. You've got me, you know, and——"

She shook her head at that and freed herself from his touch. Her voice, when it came, was low.

"That's why I wanted to see you, Joe." She put a gentle hand upon his arm. "It can't be, you know. Not now. I don't know what made me ask you not to say anything to any one this afternoon. But you see, it—it was a good thing. You——"

"But Paula," he gathered the hand resting on his arm into both his own, "you're talking nonsense now! What has all this that's happened got to do with our relation to each other? When——"

She interrupted him bluntly.

"It has everything to do, Joe. Don't you see? As things were—before this—there were inducements—reasons—why you should marry me. There was money, and position, and—and family. But now—" she gave a bitter little laugh, "you can do better, Joe. I'm no bargain now. You can get some one younger, prettier, richer. What have I to offer you now? A disgraced name. And a family smirched by a suicide. They'll take everything. And it's right they should. I won't have——"

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"But, Paula! I wasn't—wasn't—"

"Let me finish, Joe. Let me say what's in my mind. I know that just now in the heat of—of feeling over what's happened, you want to stand by your word. You're honorable. But I can't let you. Let's be frank with each other. You don't—don't love me. I've known that all along. I've known that, and yet as things were before, I was willing that you should marry me because there were other advantages for you. But now—" She withdrew from him and began to pull the ring he had given her from her finger. "There, Joe." She pressed it into his hand. "Take it."

He let it lie on his open palm. It glinted white fire toward him, and in that fire he seemed to see a round, young, amazingly beautiful face framed in an aureole of golden hair. A young voice rang in his ear, high and gay: "Can you see me? Letting a millionaire slip away? I'd hold on to him if he was as slippery as an eel." The girl in the park. *She* had run away from a man because he couldn't give her a night's fun. For a few hours of hokum, a glass of sweetened water, a frankfurter, she had scraped acquaintance with a total stranger. And here was this girl, this woman, letting a fortune slip out of her hands. And willingly. Turning to the discomforts of poverty, perhaps. Accepting her father's shame. Without a whimper.

Admiration for her sent a strange spurt of warmth through Joe. She was turning away from him, to go back to her room.

"Wait, Paula," he said.

She waited. "Yes?"

He looked down at the ring lying on the palm of his hand.

"You've been telling me the things that were in your mind, Paula. You've been frank about the reasons for *my* marrying you. Now tell me, why were *you* willing to marry me?"

She started, and alarm flashed across her face to be succeeded in an instant by a great wave of red.

"I—I——"

"Be frank, Paula."

She struck her hands together in a queer little flurry of agitation.

"Well . . . I was thirty. I—had to get married—sometime. And——"

"But you didn't have to marry me, you know. Thirty or twenty, as Ruppert Harris' daughter you could have had your pick. Why did you decide—why did you prefer me?"

She shot him a quick, appealing glance. A lump seemed to come into her throat and he saw her swallow before answering.

"I—oh! I just—I just happened—" And suddenly her voice choked up. She made a futile little gesture with her shoulders and covered her face quickly with both hands.

Joe Leyn took a long stride toward her. Something very strange was happening to him. Something that made his heart seem to pound in his ears. He put his arms about Paula Harris.

"You just happened what, Paula?" he prodded.

But no further declaration came from her just then. She stood stiffly within the embrace of his arms. He could feel her tightening, holding aloof, fighting for control. And then, without warning, she relaxed against him while sobs tore from her, shaking her as if she were a stalk in the wind. Startled, he held her, sensing for the first time the slenderness of her, the unexpected softness to her. A faint perfume came up to him from her hair. There was something pleasant, pliant and comfortable about the feel of her in his arms—a fragrance and a sincerity. It moved him to put his lips to her head.

She became abruptly quiet under that, her weight still against him. He thought he heard a little sigh break from her, and it wakened an unsuspected tenderness in him. He burrowed in between her cheek and her shoulder. His lips found a place in the hollow of her neck, and he could feel the skin spring to heat under his pressure. He whispered against her, "Was it perhaps because you just happened to—to *care* for me, dear?"

Her voice was a murmur. "Perhaps."

He gave her a great hug, his arms tightening. He wanted to throw back his head and laugh long and loud. He would have, had not death stalked the house. He was warm with a delicious warmth. He was buoyant to the point of excitement. A thought went winging through him. He had wanted romance. It had been a need with him, a condition vital to his eventual contentment. Well! If there must be romance, why couldn't a man find it in his own wife—or the woman he had picked to be his wife? What better place, what better person? Indeed, what truer, what more enduring romance could there come to him than that which was promised now? What romance fraught with sweeter thrills, more delicious anticipation?

It was not until months later that he remembered the gypsy fortune teller who had adjured him, "Marry the poor one."

He had—by then.

Dear Daddy—Continued from page 26

part of it all," she confessed naively.

Before what she saw in his face, her eyes fell. And for what seemed an eternity Evan Bradner sat immobile, unable to move a finger, or mouth a phrase. All the while people were dancing. For the first time he noticed that they were dancing and laughing in that space below. Gay, pattery music sounded.

"Don't mind so much! Please, Father! Please, dear! Don't look so terribly hurt. It's how Keith looks at me."

SHE withdrew her hands quickly. "I want you to know about him, and about me. How it came about between us. And how we couldn't help it. I think I want my father to know."

Her slender, crooning voice went on to an obligato of jazz from the orchestra, while in the crowded space below people swayed and shoved.

"Three days ago, it was the anniversary of my mother's death. Her funeral was all violets and calla-lilies. I always wear flowers when I dance. So I ordered a spray of violets, with a calla-lily, to honor her, you see. Well, I was ready to dance. Waiting there behind the palms. Waiting for the spot-light. The lights were low. And do you see that statue of Cupid? Well, my scarf got caught on the point of the arrow. I leaned over to fix it. And there was a sharp, pricking pain right here—over my heart. It was so odd—Cupid's darts, you know. But it was just the pin that held the flowers . . .

"Well I fixed it, but the flowers were loosened, and they tumbled right over the railing—right into his hands he told me afterward. He was sitting at that table there. And he came up the steps with the flowers, and I was leaning over the railing. And just that second they turned on the spot-light. It was all like—like a dazzle, a gold blur. He just blinked and smiled. He has such a dear, shy smile! And I could feel a sort of whir. That's how it must always start, I think . . . A dazzle, and blur, and whir—and you know it's started! No holding back."

She was silent for a moment, nodding her head in time with the music; then breathlessly she went on:

"He came up after the number was over. It was so strange, because he kept scowling. He scowled and scowled. He told me he was engaged, and deeply in love. He looked at my rings, and turned red, and scowled some more, and went away."

Evan Bradner had to lean across the table now in order to catch her whisper.

"In the morning he was there! At my place! I wasn't surprised. When things start like that they've got to go on. Well, he had a big box of flowers. Mignonettes and sweetheart roses. Masses of them. But he looked stern. You see, he'd come just for the good of my soul! He marched up and down and talked very loud about good and evil, and getting out of the mire, and how little I was, and how young. The sun was so bright, and the flowers smelt so good, and he kept shouting about good and evil, and all the time his voice kept getting gentler. 'Poor child,' he said, and he patted my hair, and his hand stayed there. He didn't want it to, but the fingers got all tangled in my hair. 'It's soft,' he said, 'like the down on a duckling's breast.' And then——"

Her voice mounted in a tremulous exultance. "In the full of the sunlight . . . Tears in his eyes . . . All a blur, all a dazzle!"

She sprang to her feet, trembling. "There he is now! There he is!"

"There *they* are, Mignon."

"Oh!"

She blinked twice, swallowed hard, bit her lips, slipped to her knees on the seat, and avoiding the gap among the shrubs pulled the leafy tendrils apart where they were thickest, and peered intently, lin-

geringly at a table across the floor.

There came at length a sound like a faint, tender chuckle. "She's letting her hair grow in," Mignon whispered. "It's growing in beautifully."

And after another pause, "Made for each other," she added. "Life will be good to those two, wait and see."

Then her mood changed abruptly. Her clenched fists beat a tattoo on the table. "This mustn't happen! It must all belong to Anne, do you see? Keith's in a kind of spell, and we've got to break it, you and I. Think quickly——"

"Nonsense. You'll have the boy."

"No!"

Perhaps it was the snap of a new decision in his voice which made her begin to cry softly, and without a sound, as children cry just after a cruel bruising, before the big sobs come.

"Child, from now on I take charge. You must let me decide things."

"No!" she caught at his hand entreatingly. "Can't you see? I'm thinking of a boy like the one my mother loved! Please, won't the boy my mother loved see this through with me, won't he, please? He's never failed me before . . . Daddy! I've always called you that, ever since I could speak. She taught me to call you that. And Daddy, you've always stood by! We've been through a lot together. You've been through them with me, through the horrors, dear! See me through, won't you? Look, the picture—the one my mother kept, that I keep——"

Her hand slipped under the edge of her bodice, tugged so hard that the jeweled strap over her left shoulder broke, and drew forth a flat little locket scarce an inch square which she laid very carefully before him. On the instant he recalled it all . . . The party at a Saratoga roadhouse. The flash-light photograph of the crowd at its merriest. And this yellow, faded likeness, cut carefully away from the rest of the faces, strangely alive, yet strangely unfamiliar.

He covered it hastily with his hand when a uniformed attendant stepped into the booth. "Time for your turn, Miss," he said. "Better hurry."

"In a second, in a second."

She was standing with her back turned, arranging her dress before a strip of mirror. It puzzled him that this dress should strike him so unpleasantly all at once. Daring, it looked, and bizarre, and not at all nice. The little gleaming back was bare where the shoulder strap had broken. And her fingers darted about nimbly, tucking the torn strap beneath the folds of the bodice, down, lower, ever lower. Low in front, too, a great deal too low there, where the flesh throbbed so steadily to her heart beats.

She met his eyes in the mirror, looked quickly away. Over her shoulder she said to him:

"It's not such a very good plan. But it will do—how do they put it?—the trick. Do the trick. Because he's a shy, proud, splendid prude. He must see me like this. It will help. Wait and see."

She began to pin back the flowers, spreading them over her breast into an effect at once less startling, and far more subtly suggestive. The tiny fingers flew with a horrid skill, and yet with an excessive daintiness as well, as if they were mutely protesting against an unclean task.

Evan Bradner felt suddenly, strangely calm. Poor little thing! Poor little latter-day Camille, mid-Victorian and sentimental to the core of her for all the perverse destiny which placed her on the wrong side of the fence. The very absurdity of her expedient made him feel himself master of the situation at last.

They were beginning to lower the lights, little by little, for her dance. This time, of course, he would see that she didn't dance. He caught the frail wrists firmly within his hands, and found her somehow in his arms, clinging fiercely there, sobbing while she clung.

"Don't mind so much! See it through with me, Daddy!"

IT WAS the shrill, weak sobbing of a frightened child. It was as if, while she lay there in his arms at last, with her little half-naked breast crushed against his waistcoat and her hands clutching so wildly, she were a little child still, and all the hurts life had dealt her only a child's bruises, and all the sordidness a mere spattering from mud pies.

"Daddy . . ."

Her lips grazed his. There followed a quick, agile movement. Then unaccountably, she was gone—from his arms, from the booth!

The lights continued to lower. And she was gone, in the trappings of a wanton, to do her midnight turn!

He sprang in a single stride out into the corridor. She was turning the corner, looking back over her shoulder. With every consideration swept aside, he rushed after her. She turned the next corner still ahead, but only a little ahead now. But for a trumpet blare which dazed him, and the blinding dazzle of a spotlight over the marble stairs, he would have overtaken her before she reached that open space where the bronze Cupid stood.

She halted there for half a second, her hand on the Cupid's head, assuming her stage presence, her stage smile; then, just as he started toward her, began to run lightly down the stairs—stumbled, wavered——

There was a sharp, ripping sound. He saw that the silver laces of her petticoat flounce had caught on the tip of the love god's wing, which drooped with so deceptive a lassitude to the floor. She recovered herself, but the next instant she lurched, then pitched headlong against the sharp, stone edges. And while the waltz strains ran blithely on, she plunged down the full flight into a little still heap of gay silks on the floor below.

The music died on a discord. A bleak silence sank over the room. It broke when a woman screamed. To Evan Bradner, it was as if every nerve in his body had become a separate, strumming, squirming entity.

Mignon had vanished. Eluded him again. It wasn't conceivable that he should find her amidst that heap of rainbow-tinted silks down there.

And from the tip of the love god's drooping wing a shred of silver lace dangled like a sorry pennant over a silver slipper heel on the step below.

"SPINE . . . heart . . . skull . . ."

It was maddening to Bradner to

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stand apart from the group like an outsider, holding Anne's firm, cold hand.

"Spine . . . heart . . . skull . . ." Among the scents and cushions of Mignon's dressing-room, the physician seemed misplaced and ineffectual with his matter-of-fact mutterings.

They had stretched her on a chaise-longue where the doctor hovered over her. And to her father the heart-shaped face looked curiously unfamiliar, with all the glow of her, all the flush and luster and ecstasy that had been Mignon, washed out into a wax whiteness against a scarlet cushion.

At the head of the chaise-longue, like marionettes which fate had set precisely in their appointed places, stood Dion Porterman and young Keith Greer. Their very profiles clashed, the boy's likable face illumined by his agony, Dion Porterman's only the more sodden for the grief which shook his big bulk into something unpleasantly like a vast, gelatinous mass. Most unpleasantly he wheezed, while his plump hands made clutching gestures as if to regain this last bit of youth and beauty which evaded him now.

"My fiancèe——"

With a belated regard for the conventions, he kept stressing the word, over and over. "My fiancée, doctor. Spare no expense."

He stopped short. Mignon's lips were moving. Her brow furrowed. Over Keith Greer's face a ripple appeared to pass, and across his forehead the sweat beads stood out in orderly little rows.

At last, loud and clear, and in a child's shrill treble, she spoke:

"Don't mind so much, Daddy!"

Her lashes trembled, her eyes opened wide. Slowly, steadily, inscrutably, they traveled about the room from one face to the other, rested finally on her father's face. And in that bright, still gaze he saw an anguish of entreaty which kept him rooted at the door when all the while he wanted so terribly to wave these others away, and take his place at her side.

For that still gaze spoke pleadingly of a sweet conspiracy between them, bade him "see it through" with her. In a flash he knew that she was straining her every faculty in a last, desperate groping for something that would "do the trick," effectively, this time, and once and for all.

Keith Greer touched her hand. At his touch her face cleared. With a huge effort she shook her hand free, wriggled her shoulder fretfully, turned on her side, away from him, and toward the other man. Her hands fluttered out. She caught the lapels of Dion Porterman's coat between her fingers.

"Daddy," she breathed, in a silken purr. "Daddy, don't mind so much!"

Something went dead then on Keith Greer's face. He blinked his eyes like a person waking from a long sleep, and with a faint fastidious aversion, winced away from the dying girl.

But through her father's spirit there surged neither pity nor horror, but a huge pride in this child of his—in her unflinching fidelity to her outworn code, in the valor and gallantry of this final gesture! Romantic to the core of her, while eternity loomed!

"My fiancée!" Dion Porterman was wailing, as he caught the lifeless form in his stumpy arms. "Somebody get a doctor! This man don't know anything. It's all right, I tell you! She'll be all right! Another doctor——"

THROUGH the long ride homeward, with a dunnish dawn slowly breaking, Evan Bradner sat silent beside Anne, his brain fighting shy of the evening's episode, his heart very full.

It was bewildering to reflect that through it all he had remained silent without the slightest consciousness of playing a craven rôle. For all the while there had been that still, bright gaze before him, bespeaking a pact, a sweet conspiracy, bidding him "see it through" to the finish.

"Father——"

Anne's voice was just audible above the motor's purr.

"Father, a little of Keith died, too, you know."

With a mature, guarded air that was new to her, "I could have forgiven her," she went on, "if he'd never come back to me. Or if he'd come back badly battered, and—full of her, always a little in love with her, year in, year out! But I can't forgive her his face to-night, when some of him died. Some of the boy in him, Father . . . He's going through a gaudy little hell now. And I have to sit here, and just wait and wait."

She huddled closer.

"Father, before she fell, I had a glimpse of her. Just a glimpse. Do you know, I've an idea that's all Keith ever had, or any one else, for that matter. That's all she was, I believe—a glimpse——"

She drew in her breath sharply. "Loveliness!"

Then, with a shrug, "Oh, well, at any rate, there'll be the children, I suppose."

He sat suddenly very straight. Perhaps Anne had hit upon it. A glimpse. A gesture. Glamour. Heartbreak. Futility. But it was superb, none the less, all this heartbreak and futility . . .

"Daddy——"

They were at the foot of the hill which led to the house. Anne spoke hurriedly. "I shan't ever call you Daddy again. It would be unkind to Keith. Will you miss it?"

"I'll miss it."

She gave his hand a fierce little squeeze. All through it, he realized, she had been holding his hand. And how they clung, these girls' hands! Like little children's.

A glimpse. Perhaps he'd had it. Into the stark significance of fatherhood, stript grimly and grotesquely tonight of layer upon layer of superficialities. No mere "looking out" for them, but "seeing it through" with them. Through disillusionment and disaster. Standing by.

His eyes misted. Those other hands, they'd quivered so. Like the wounded bird he'd found once. Well, they were quiet now. But how the memory of that first moment would linger, when from the dance floor she first outstretched those tiny, quivering hands!

"Here we are, Father."

He looked up at the house wondering what brought a dawning sense of security and comfort to him. It had to do with the windows. Brightly lighted. Nannie's windows . . .

Some intuitive inkling of trouble must have hurried his wife back tonight. He sprang briskly up the steps. Nannie was waiting in there. Nannie was home.

Rules for McClure's $25,000 Prize Novel Contest

TO THE author of the novel best adapted for magazine and book publication, and motion picture production, as determined by the judges of this contest, a prize of $25,000 in cash will be paid.

McClure's, Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, and Cosmopolitan Productions will acquire, respectively, all serial rights, American and Canadian book rights and world motion picture rights.

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1—McClure's Prize Novel Contest opened June 1, 1926, and closes at midnight, January 1, 1927. Any writer is eligible (foreign citizenship being no bar) who has never before had a novel published in book form, or who has had no more than three novels published in book form.

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7—A writer may enter more than one novel. No one may compete who is employed by any of the three participating organizations, or related to such employees. All manuscripts must be original. No translations will be considered. Collaborations will not be entered. The publishers cannot be made party to any libel action or suit for damages that might grow out of the contest in any connection therewith. All manuscripts must be typewritten, double-spaced, and on one side of the paper only.

Novels submitted which do not win the prize but which have adequate merit will be given the advantage of possible choice for serial publication in McClure's, for book publication by Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, and for production by Cosmopolitan Productions.

hook moving like a rhythmic darning needle in and out of the lace to be sold for furniture money.

"Business is bad now." Mr. Goldman cut his cigar sparingly. "Hardly any women are wearing corsets any more, and besides there's a line of rubber corsets . . . The fleshiest women are wearing them. No bones anywhere. I'll have to go to Chicago one of these days to start a similar line." Mr. Goldman blew out his smoke in an opaque sigh. The journey troubled him. It brought his mind back to Ruby. "You'll take care of Ruby when I'm away?" Through the gold spectacles his eyes pleaded with her like a child's eyes.

"Yes, I'll take care of Ruby," Nanina said solemnly. Nanina knew what watching meant. She was a watcher, born of a long line of watchers. She had watched boiling kettles, growing cabbages, and sick soldiers, just as she watched Carlo and the little house. One kept things together by watching them.

"There's no harm in Ruby," Mr. Goldman said. He repeated it, night after night, as the winter went on: "No harm in Ruby." That was Mr. Goldman's only comment on the difference in Ruby, which no one could help seeing. For by the month of February Ruby was so thin that her bones modeled themselves under her neck and arms, and her eyes didn't see Mr. Goldman or Nanina any longer. She looked past them both as if she waited, breath suspended, for something beyond.

"She's mad," Nanina of the Palisades said to herself, pitying her. She was mad, and there was nothing to do for mad people—only to hope and watch and wait.

Nanina remembered always the way Mr. Goldman's bullet head looked against the mahogany front door, one evening in March, when he stood between it and Ruby as she was leaving for a rendezvous with Reggie.

"Ain't you ever goin' to get through dancing, dearie?" he had said, his hand on her fur collar. There was a dogged look about his whole figure, as if he couldn't be pushed any further. Above the spangled, yellow dress which glinted a line in her evening coat, Ruby's eyes came back from distances. His look of obstruction made him real to her. For a moment she saw him vividly as a barrier to Reggie, and her eyes widened with the animal fright of stampeded cattle.

"Don't you keep me back. I want life!" she said, lifting her arms as though she held it, an iridescent ball, in her hands. "I'll leave you if you keep me back." Her glittering look advanced towards him, Mr. Goldman moving quickly aside, as if to get away from the trampling little gold shoes with their rhinestone heels.

"Maybe Ruby will get tired and want to settle down in the country," Mr. Goldman said to Nanina, slumping down in his chair like a sick man, after Ruby had banged the door behind her. As if to reassure himself, he put his hand in his vest pocket and brought out a flat green book.

"Twenty thousand dollars," he said, denting each number on the page with his square fingers. "All my life I've worked for it. The last hundred went this week. I've saved all my life for a house—a house in the country. Then when I got Ruby I wanted it still more. A little house for Ruby and the children." Maybe it was his reference to children that seemed to dim his glasses; he wiped them with his cotton handkerchief.

Twenty thousand dollars was marked as a deposit to the left of the check book. Not one leaf was out. They all lay, grist for the house, clean and intact in cool leaves in the open book on the zinc-covered kitchen table.

Not so many months ago Nanina had seen Carlo's house on a grocery bag in the same place—Carlo's house which had a roof on it now and in May would have her room ready so that she could live in the center of his home, watching him build around her. For a moment it seemed to her as if Mr. Goldman was Carlo, as if all men were Carlo, dreaming Carlo's dreams; as if Carlo's house and her heart built into it stretched around the world.

"You'll have your house and your garden and your babies," she said, her secure way leaving no doubt about it at all.

"Her eyes are deep like Ma's were," Mr. Goldman said to himself, and for a moment he felt that, because Nanina said it, it would be so.

In April there was an irresistible pressure of rival corsets against Mr. Goldman.

"I'LL have to go to Chicago," he said, leaning his elbows heavily on the zinc-covered table. "Ruby . . . Ruby . . ." For a while he could go no further.

"I've left Ruby power of attorney," he said finally, "so that if anything happens to me she'll have no trouble. She can get the money right away." It was as if he tucked Ruby comfortably in before leaving. "My check book is in my top bureau drawer," he said.

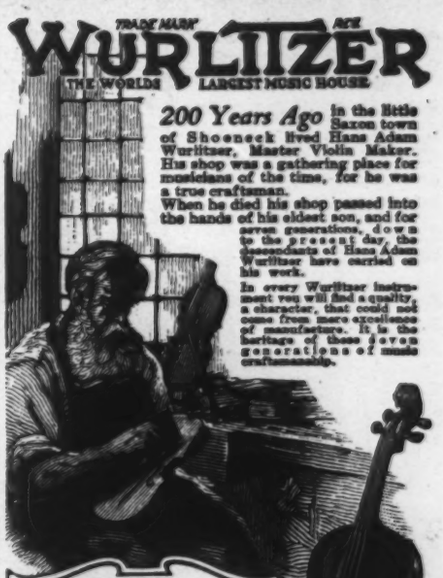
"Power of attorney." Nanina nodded her head wisely. He might as well be talking Greek to her. But when she pictured the check book as his house in the corner of his drawer, she decided that she would have to watch carefully, and the line of her mouth underneath her sentinel eyes was firm and straight above a solid masonry of clenched teeth.

"I'll be coming to you the first week in May," she said to Carlo on Tuesday night, darning a great hole in his red woolen sock. Carlo's smile expanded at her.

Carlo needed her, for the house had taken its toll of him. White spears pointed the mass of his hair. A beam had knocked out a tooth, and his straight nose signaled warnings from the thinness of his receding cheeks.

Nanina wanted to lie beside him, with the fresh air, savorous with spring, blowing through the open window, both of them listening to the dead twigs snapping outside and all the living noises of the country night. But a house that was built of love made one responsible for other houses.

"Until May," Carlo said, leaning against her as they stood on the threshold



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of the back door. He drew his strength leaning against her.

It was Nanina who packed Mr. Goldman's bag, and smiled her shepherding smile at him as the elevator slotted him downstairs. She dusted his room every day after he had gone, passing her hand into the drawer over the check book to make sure that it was still there. She felt that she stroked his house in miniature, waiting like a seed for a spring in Ruby to give it growing power.

It was not so easy to watch Ruby, she found. She grew impatient, calling this Ruby names. "Wanton—cheat," she said under her breath. Nanina grew cross, running about all day, answering wild, nervous calls; and at night all rest escaped from her sleepless eyes as she looked at her watch—one, two, three o'clock—listening, listening, until the soft thud of the front door allowed her to sleep.

It was Nanina of the Palisades who tempered the wrath of the other—the kitchen—Nanina. Through Carlo's love she knew that Ruby—unstable, crumbling Ruby—was the cornerstone of Mr. Goldman's house, and that, mad or not, she was important to him because he had built on her. But she had no pity for Reggie. She hated Reggie, the destroyer of houses. She hated him when she served him Mr. Goldman's food at dinner, for it seemed to her that he sat right down in the armchair in the middle of Mr. Goldman's ghost.

"Some more peas, Reggie? I bought them myself." Ruby had a special voice for Reggie; it fluted out, broken on a quick breath.

"I drink your liquid eyes," Reggie said, pouring out Ruby's eyes generously from Mr. Goldman's Sunday whiskey bottle. Nanina's burned angrily at the sight of his loose lips blurred under the rim of the glass.

Ruby turned her head from the food Nanina passed her. "No, thank you. I'm not hungry," she said, as if the steam of its essence nauseated her. Ruby lived on sips of coffee and crumbs. Her cheeks were almost as yellow as her eyes, which followed Reggie's motions with a straying, homeless look.

"A poet needs love as the ground needs the sun," he said when it came time to smoke one of Mr. Goldman's Sunday cigars, wetting it carefully and watching all the lines in Ruby's sallow face wilt suddenly downward.

"COULDN'T a poet love just one woman?" Ruby asked the question pleadingly, and as she spoke she spurted a blue flame from a match and held it out to him. Love, love, love, Nanina thought. It is a madness unless you spill it out into a house and children. Inside, it destroys you. It consumed Ruby, turned and twisted her about into a gnarled, misshapen thing. In her iron bed that night Nanina heard Ruby coming down the hall with Reggie.

"Do you love me, Reggie?"

The front door threw the whisper like a sounding-board through the pantry into Nanina's room, and then Reggie's answer, thick like molasses which stuck about her listening ears in the dark:

"Why yes, of course I do. Of course, of course."

"You're sure, Reggie?" The voice clung to him.

Behind the banging door Nanina heard crying, stifled, dwindling into Ruby's bedroom. She looked at her watch; it was half past three. Dread edged her heart. Poor Gogo! She couldn't watch for him; she was helpless. Against the dark her eyes stared, dry-socketed. She couldn't think of Carlo. It seemed selfish to crawl into her own house while Mr. Goldman's was rocking so insecurely.

One afternoon the front doorbell buzzed like a huge insect in the small kitchen. Nanina took the telegram to the gauze-covered panes of the parlor door, closed as it usually was when Reggie was there.

"A telegram, *madame.*"

Nanina noticed that Ruby's eyes were bright like glass that has been polished.

"He's coming," Ruby said, as if she were jerked up suddenly in front of a wall. "He's coming."

Nanina saw very well by the vanilla ice cream color of Reggie's face that it was the master who was coming. His eyes and Ruby's met, like two highwaymen in the night. But he smiled easily, tearing the yellow paper to bits.

"Oh, well, a husband more or less——" he said, as if he rolled a score of husbands around in the greased places of his mind.

"Good old Gogo, he is coming tonight," Nanina said to herself the next afternoon, as she washed his room from top to bottom, oiling the old wooden bureau, relining the drawers with white paper so as to make a clean corner for his check book. Even if she had failed with Ruby, she thought, his house was waiting safely for him where he had left it. She took up the green book and held it a moment in her hands. Opening it out mechanically on the bureau, she turned the leaves to make sure that it was all right. Suddenly turning them backward, her eyes focused on an empty space torn out opposite the stub. Nanina never looked at figures. To her the book intact was the symbol of Mr. Goldman's house, and the torn first page toppled the house down in front of her.

"The house is stolen!" she said aloud, writhing her fingers together. And now she explained to herself the highwaymen look between Ruby and Reggie. They had looked at each other like robbers, silently pledged together by their badness. She glanced at the clock with rhinestone borlers on Ruby's filet-covered dressing table. Mr. Goldman was coming in two more hours. They must have taken the money out of the bank by this time. Where had they put it?

"If I can only find it—if I can only find it," Nanina said to herself.

All her mind in her fingers, she went stealthily into Ruby's room, her right hand like a dog's nose scenting about, moving sensitively into Ruby's bureau drawers, going deep into the mattress of the pink enameled bed, turning up the cushions on the chairs, feeling along the edge of the flowered rug. Slyly, without stopping its advance a moment, her hand slid round the door of Ruby's closet. At the sight of Ruby's empty coat hangers, with only the fur-bordered tan wrap dangling on the pole above a yellow suitcase, Nanina drew her breath with a whistle that cut the stillness of the empty room.

Walking into crime is different from imagining it. A Ruby packed and ready to leave, with Mr. Goldman's house as her booty and all her clothes safely smuggled out, dizzied Nanina. She tugged wildly at the bag, the lock resisting her. Instinctively her fingers went nosing into the pocket of the tan coat, pulling out a silver key. She fitted it into the lock which sprang the bag open as if it were going to bite her fingers. Suddenly, at the bottom of the bag, her sensitive fingertips came against a pile of crisp-edged notes. At the contact the air about Nanina broke into glittering pieces like floating glass, blinding her eyes. Drawing out the bank-notes, she licked her thumb. Twenty bills of a thousand dollars each! At the final proof that Ruby—whose clothes she had washed, whose bed she made every morning—that the everyday, familiar Ruby was a thief, Nanina's bones turned to water. She sank to the floor, wiping the sweat off her face with her gingham apron.

OUTSIDE the front door she heard the muffled settling of the elevator. *Mon Dieu, mon Dieu,* if it were Reggie! she thought. If he killed her! She locked the bag and dropped the key into the pocket of Ruby's coat, slipping the notes in her dress, deep, deep down. She forced herself up with the knob of the closet door. Closing the door behind her, she leaned against it as though she were glued to the panels. She heard the bills crackling under her dress. If he heard them crackling and killed her!

"Jesus!" she prayed inside her lips, *"Jesus!"* She held to the name by her teeth, keeping herself up by its strength.

She heard Reggie and Ruby outside. They seemed to fill the place with whispers.

When Ruby came into the room, Nanina imagined her coming straight for the money, and, as she moved from the closet door, she felt that Ruby must hear the notes crackling like a volley of artillery right over her heart.

"I want my bag," Ruby said in her closed voice. "I'm spending the night with Sadie"—sending the lie brazenly at Nanina's white face.

Trembling, Nanina followed her out into the hall. Reggie in his tango-in-repose step advanced towards them.

"Hurry, hurry—it's eight o'clock now." Covetously closing his hand on the yellow bag, he shoved Ruby out of the door by her elbow. Across the threshold Nanina stood, large and dumb, looking at them. There was not a word in her to hold Ruby. Inside her she was turning over all the words she knew, but she couldn't find one to hold Ruby. She put out her hand and nipped Ruby's blue satin dress. The whirring of ropes filled the little vestibule as the elevator stopped with a jerk. Reggie's fingers beaked themselves together, pinching open Nanina's clutch. Through the sliding elevator door she saw Ruby and Reggie becoming endless Rubies and Reggies in the echoing, mirror lining of the cage.

"Accidente!" She clenched her smarting hand at them. "Tricked!" Her mind

spat the word at Reggie. She, Nanina the servant, had fooled the *Apache*. She laughed aloud, slamming the door of the apartment.

Then immediately the other Nanina, Carlo's Nanina, gained the upper hand. "You know he cares more for Ruby even than the house," Nanina of the Palisades said to the other Nanina. "You will *have* to get Ruby back for him! Hurry, hurry!"

She ran for her cape and on her way through the kitchen she stuffed the bank notes in the bread box. In the front hall of the apartment she saw them through the outer glass door, blurring into a taxi which moved, a red smear, across her vision.

"Cab, please!" She fished out a dollar, waved it at the hall boy, and a cab was there by a miracle.

"Follow!" she called to the driver, pointing to the red streak vanishing down the gray street. "Follow!" she said again, as the cab in front flashed scarlet round a corner. For a moment Nanina, balked, pursued air. Then she turned after it, and was closing behind her red quarry again. She could see Ruby's head burrowing on Reggie's shoulder. Down the long avenue they went, one rattle after another, traveling together into the apex of the diamond necklace of street lights. Near an arch with a horseshoe space Nanina's cab stopped abruptly. She looked out at a door like a mouth, through which light streamed down a broad stoop. She watched Reggie and Ruby ascend it, the yellow bag catching the light on its smooth surface.

Out of the taxi, she fished again, this time beneath her pink elastic garter. "A dollar-fifty! *Mon Dieu*, what a price!"

Nanina held her change in her hand. Not one cent more would she give to the robber on the box.

Slinking close to the rail, she climbed the stoop. Against the light, several men and women moved like black shadows, split apart by a white shirt-front or a bare neck. In the doorway Nanina paused, the light rushing over her, whirring in her ears. Above the flood a boy in a blue uniform blurred.

"Want anything?" he said.

As though under water she heard his voice. Silently she handed him a silver disk and he vanished.

PUSHED by some people from behind who looked strangely at her, she moved slowly across the marble vestibule, her eyes ferreting for Reggie and Ruby. Peering down a flight of stairs which led to one of several dining-rooms, she saw them seated together at a table, a pudgy waiter taking the order. Reggie's right hand lay on the table, and as the waiter left, Ruby's fingers came toward it, softly clutching the bony fingers.

Suddenly Reggie turned his palm upward, scattering the fingers of Ruby. He was asking for something, Nanina thought, and she crept close to the wall when she saw Ruby drop a key on his folded napkin.

Taking it up, he worked the key into the lock of the bag. Then it seemed to Nanina that five crawling snakes went into the suitcase, for she could see pink silken things billowing over his fingers. Into the four corners they went, quietly at first, but moving after a moment with a tumultuous, agitated motion. Then Ruby came to the rescue. She ran her sparkle of nails in beside his hand, secure in her plunge, knowing just where to go.

Nanina's heart dropped a stitch as she saw Ruby's hand moving quicker and quicker in a panic of hunting, scurrying about under the clothes and then tossing them out in an untidy pile on the floor until the suitcase lay empty like a wide open book with nothing on its linen bottom.

It was then that Nanina saw a dreadful thing. "Monster!" she screamed in her mind. She saw Ruby's hands clinging to the clenched fist of Reggie. Up her clasp went with his, then down came their hands together on the table, Ruby's knuckles underneath, in a smashing blow that made plates jump.

"Monster!" Nanina, leaping forward, clinging to the rail, stumbling down the stairs, stood face to face with him at the foot, his straw hat in hand. When he saw Nanina his scattered feeling mobilized in fury against her, and he came close to her, a sudden red closing over his eyes.

"You took the money, you rotten—" Nanina's figure confronted him with balanced sturdiness. He might as well have advanced upon a mountain.

"Yes, I saved the money from you, vile *Apache!*" A deep triumphant timbre was in the words she flung at him. Reggie lifted his arm, brandishing it before the white stillness of her face. A couple going downstairs jostled against him, the woman slanting curious eyes at him; the pretty maid at the hat-stand watched sharply across the railing. Reggie caught their glances with hesitating eyes and his hand wavered in the air, came down irresolutely, his whole figure loosening. He stumbled past Nanina up the stairs.

Nanina rushed down to Ruby, whose head was bent now, nesting on lamed arms.

"Madame—madame——"

Ruby turned the glassy surface of her eyes to Nanina. Unsurprised, she watched her scoop up the clothes, push the bag together. Strong arms lifted Ruby like a boneless thing, riveting her against the chair, while the waiter slid two squabs, crisp in parsley bunches, in front of them.

"Mon Dieu, mon Dieu, what a waste!" Nanina thought. "Ten dollars?" They had meant to eat ten dollars? One day's work of Carlo spent in one evening? Her cotton stocking was dwindling like a broken bank when Ruby said tonelessly: "I have no money," and Nanina pulled the last bill out from below her left knee.

In the cab Nanina sat upright like a Sibyl, Ruby's body stretched across her comfortable broad lap.

"He didn't care—he didn't care——" Ruby's thin back trembled as if the words came out of her like knives, leaving their torn path behind.

Before the apartment door Ruby balked in Nanina's arms.

"Steady," said Nanina. "Steady."

As she inserted the key, the door was opened from the inside. Nanina had a

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vision of Mr. Goldman's face, a ball of light against the dark hall, quenched suddenly at the sight of Ruby who put out her hands to push him away and then fell in a heap at his feet.

"I've brought her back," Nanina said simply, picking up the limp bundle and dumping it in his arms.

"Poor baby! Poor baby!" he said, looking tenderly down upon the squalls that flooded convulsively over the pale face. And as Ruby turned her head against his shoulder, his face shone with peace.

Nanina watched the slow progress of his bullet head up the hall. Across his shoulders Ruby's hands hung like tassels below her flopping arms. As he closed the door to Ruby's room behind him, Nanina turned to her kitchen. Then she stopped. She had heard such sounds before. Soldiers coming out of the long jag of ether made such sounds—light, floating cries—their dislocated minds finding no rest, no association anywhere. Above Ruby's voice she could hear Mr. Goldman's brooding tones.

"That's what she wanted—that's what they all wanted, the poor wounded ones," Nanina thought. "Something to enfold them protectingly."

In the early light, as the morning orchestra of explosive doors, scraping windows, clinking milk bottles began, Mr. Goldman, still in his traveling suit, came across the threshold of the kitchen.

"I want to thank you," he said to Nanina, keeping his glance on the linoleum squares, looking down as if Ruby's shame was in his eyes. "She told me about the money," he said, swallowing to keep his voice firm. "Maybe he took the money some way she don't remember. Maybe we'll never get it back. Anyway I have Ruby. We can start again," he said, looking up. And then—"Ruby's all right," he said. "She's so young."

"You don't have to start again, Mr. Goldman. You don't have to," Nanina said, sniffling back her tears. Lifting loaves of fresh-baked bread from the bread box, she pulled out the package of bank-notes, smelling cleanly of dough.

"You have your little house," Nanina said, crying now in sobs that made her sturdy body quiver. "You don't have to," she said, laying the green package, just as she had laid Ruby, in his hands.

IN SEPTEMBER the house on the Palisades stood complete, solid from beam to beam around Nanina, painted over tight with three coats of white paint. In the morning under its sunrise bath the house took a color like Nanina's tea-roses; at noon there were orange tints under its red roof; and just before dusk when Carlo turned in at the gate a pale mauve house stood before him, with Nanina closing like an eclipse over the kitchen light, cooking something with garlic in it that made his mouth water.

"I will give him an omelet tonight," she said to herself, sitting on the porch, elbows bare now below the flowered sleeves, the flat of her thumb pushing through crisp pea-pods, shooting green bullets against the tin pan. She had pulled them off the vines herself at the back of the house where they bordered rows of cabbages, with hard frilled leaves like purple metal. Behind her were the crisply curtained windows of her room and Carlo's, with the great wooden bed in it and the yellow bureau. From the bedroom opened her tiled bathroom and next to that was the kitchen, with its white stove, so pure that one might cook on it for the angels. Carlo would make the rest of the furniture later. What was a little furniture to Carlo, who built houses, inlaying them with steam heat and electric light with his own two hands? Carlo could do anything. He could build a cathedral. Pooh, a cathedral!

CARLO, the giant man, stood so close to Nanina's vision that he shut out the rest of the world, leaving only beautiful illusions. It seemed to Nanina that at the thought of Carlo things grew up in her heart, making it like a crowded garden so that it hurt her to breathe; and it was about this time that something had stirred inside her—another growing thing—and all the smothered feeling vanished, calmed into a deep awe of herself.

From the kitchen window she looked down the road at two shapes hazing into the warm afternoon. A sturdy figure and beside it another that moved fluttering on its arm. Nanina watched them idly until to her delight they became the familiar figures of Ruby and Mr. Goldman. Nanina met them, pulling down the sleeves of her flowered dress from habit, smiling at them the slow, sweet smile that left an after-smile behind it.

"Oh, this is a joy!" she said, and she swung out her strong hand like a pulley, helping Ruby up the steps.

Ruby mounted, panting a little at the effort, her face white, with purple shadows smudged under her eyes. Mr. Goldman sat on the bench, his arm around Ruby. He looked ten years younger, Nanina thought.

"Fine peas." Mr. Goldman ran his fingers jauntily through the pan. Then he cleared his throat with a heraldic cough. "Mrs. Goldman isn't well," he said, looking with great pride at Ruby. "She wants to live in the country." Nanina felt he spoke the last sentence just as a trimming, because he came right back again to his first announcement, and repeated: "Mrs. Goldman isn't well at all," looking at Nanina with sly boastfulness. He couldn't have expressed himself more distinctly if Fra Angelico had painted him with long robes and a bunch of annunciation lilies.

Ruby smiled a ghost smile at Nanina.

"All the starch is out of her," Nanina thought. It had gone into Mr. Goldman! Anyone could see that Ruby's baby agreed very well with her husband.

Mr. Goldman settled himself against the bench. "You've got a great house here," he said. "Red roof, green door ——" he twinkled at Nanina as if he recognized his own house as she had painted it for him on those dreary nights when Ruby was dancing, dancing in a nightmare, not clinging to his arm as now.

He took out his cigar, and Ruby lit it with diamond-like fingers, just as she used to light Reggie's. Through the smoke Nanina saw Carlo coming toward them.

"Hello, Carlo," Mr. Goldman said, grasping Carlo's hand exuberantly in his pudgy one. I would like a house just like this."

And then, as men will—men who know the approaching importance of fatherhood—the two of them stalked off together to survey the place.

Huddled against the white bench, Ruby was almost as relaxed as the last time Nanina had seen her in Mr. Goldman's arms. Deep shadows were buried like sluggish threats below her yellow eyes. Setting down the pan of green peas, Nanina said: "You are not happy?" She spoke gently, touching Ruby's hair softly, as she touched the leaves in her garden to see how they were growing.

"Happy?" Ruby's lips grimaced the word at her. "It's because he's so good that I can't ever be happy," she said, sinking her head on Nanina's shoulder.

"Poor little one," Nanina said gently, feeling Ruby crying, drawing her into the great pillow of her breast.

"I don't know—I don't know——" said Ruby. "Supposing it wasn't his baby, and he so good. If it was——" her little body shook in tumult.

"You must trust," Nanina said. "Hasn't he made everything right for you because he loves you?" How wonderful life was, she thought to herself. It was a great garden. In some places it was planted carefully, weeded by love, like her corner and Carlo's, and sometimes a jungle seed got in, sometimes—but everything growing out, growing, always growing.

"It will be well with you. I will help you," she said, her tending gardener's hand straightening up Ruby, wiping her eyes with her cotton apron just in time, for Mr. Goldman and Carlo were walking up the path.

"He's going to build us a house, Ruby!" Mr. Goldman almost sang the news, and against her shoulder Nanina could feel Ruby's little nod. "Until it's finished, would you mind living in the apartment upstairs?" Watching his wife's hand creep under Nanina's which closed over it like a wing, Mr. Goldman expanded again. "It will be perfect," he said, in the tone he used to encourage timid customers. "Rube, dearie, across the way I'm to put up an advertisement of Goldman Milo Corsets." He waved his hand like a salute to the street.

Later the four sat together in the kitchen at the wooden table with its red cloth. Beside the dish of cabbage Nanina's omelet puffed above onions and tomatoes. She cut thick slices of brown bread, handing them around on the knife. Mr. Goldman poured four glasses of foamy milk.

"To the growing houses," he said, "and to the vegetable gardens!" He clinked his glass across the table with Ruby's, then with his eye on his wife he coughed again: "To the babies!" he said, draining his glass, and Ruby, feeling Nanina's strong hand on hers under the red cloth, drained her glass too, smiling faintly.

"To the babies!" she repeated, and from Carlo and Nanina and Mr. Goldman a hearty laugh rose up around the table.

———

requested the visitor patiently, "and tell me why it's my fault."

"Didn't you bring him around here to be pepped up?"

"Yes, but not to be eaten alive, with the pepper for a condiment."

"Bev is growing clever," crowed the girl. "Effect of association with the best minds. Willowdean," she explained, "is saving Blackie's soul from science."

"What's she going to do with it after she's got it saved; that's what I want to know. Blackie is shot to ribbons. I'm worried about the boy. Derry, I believe Willowdean has deliberately got him and then deliberately chucked him. Just for the fun of it, damn her."

"She hasn't chucked him; I wish she had," Derry mumbled her lips. It had slipped out before she could check it. "It would be better for both of them. Anyway, why do all your worrying for the man? You might think of the girl a little!"

"You don't think she's really fallen for him?"

"Why not? Can't you imagine a girl falling in love with any kind of man but the big, blundering, boyish kind?"

"That's rotten of you, Derry," he said, aggrieved.

"I know it, dear boy." She was contrite at once. Bev could always make her feel sorry for him, eager to make it up to him. "It's just another kind of attractiveness, his. That air of detachment and vague distinction of his might make him decidedly dangerous to a woman who is something more than a fluff. And Willowdean is."

"Then you do think ——"

"Never mind what I think." Derry decided that the discussion of her friend had gone far enough. "This isn't my evening for thinking. I shall now concentrate on my toilet. Stretch out and be comfy."

Presently he sat up and stared at the half open door of her room, just as her bare arm was hastily withdrawn.

"What sort of funny work are you up to now, Derry?" he suspiciously demanded.

"Just a little experiment," returned her voice from inside. "It's Blackie's new hypnotic crystal. He left it here to try some experiments on sister."

Beverly wriggled. "You needn't try 'em on me. I don't like that quirly light wriggling in my eyes."

"That's the effect it has on you, is it? Beware, young man, or I shall have you in my power."

He said glumly, "I'm enough in your power now."

"Maybe you'd prefer to get me into yours."

"With that globe thing? No, thank you. I don't like to have you monkeying with that, Derry-girl."

"It's quite fun. Sometimes I wake up in the morning and see a jiggly gleam dancing in it; then I feel sleepy again and off I go. I expect, if the sun hit it just right and I was in what Blackie calls a malleable mood, I might go completely under. Wouldn't that be thrilling?"

"You quit it," said he bluntly.

"*All* right! If you don't like my black magic, we'll have a little white. Now, close your eyes, count three slowly, and then look." When the process had been completed, she stood in the door. "Well, haven't you got *anything* to say?"

The involuntary sigh that seemed still to be tremulous about her when he at length spoke, was more eloquent than his words: "You're a lovely and dangerous thing!"

"Why be so gloomy about it?" she rallied him.

His "I love you so, Derry," seemed not wholly pertinent, considered as explanation; nevertheless it satisfied her.

"For your good opinion you may kiss me once—but don't rumple me up," she warned.

While he was still hungrily clasping her she bent back from his lips, raising an admonitory finger. "There Bev—sufficient!"

"You're sure you're not growing away from me, Derry?"

"Of course. Why should I?" But she hoped that there was more conviction in the sound of her words than in the motive back of them. "We're off, Bev. Let's make it a *good* party."

Fashions in party decorations change. A decade before Martin Cole's would have been mainly floral. Now they were mainly alcoholic with floral and arboreal settings. The service elevator, pressed into special use for the guests, contained a complete bar, fitted across one end; its slow progress to the roof gave ample time for a "starter" to be shaken up and absorbed. It delivered its passengers to another bar where a special committee of welcome set them on their way. As it was after midnight when Derry and her escort arrived, the committee already showed symptoms of overwork. Derry, entering the central compartment where the dancing space was walled in with partitions of massed foliage, was acclaimed by Bartram, who gave her formal announcement in a line from the play:

"And here, questing with eager and unconscious eyes, Man, the Destroyer, trips incarnate Maidenhood."

THERE followed a ripple of applause, as for a stage entry, an involuntary tribute to the gleaming splendor of Derry's girlhood, so aptly caught and fixed in the magniloquent phrase. Martin Cole jigged across the room with open arms.

"If Maidenhood is tripping, may I be there when it falls!"

"Don't be rough, Marty, or I won't kiss you."

"You have to. It's my birthday." He drew her into a friendly hug. The glum playwright had succumbed to a grudging affection for Derry, in which was no sentiment; all that side of his nature was engrossed in Willowdean.

Released, Derry wrinkled her sensitive nostrils. "What's the delicious, old-fashioned smell?"

"I point with pride," returned Martin, and did so. Derry, following the indication, beheld the wonder of a whole bed of growing mint, from behind which came sounds of tinkling glass and chattering

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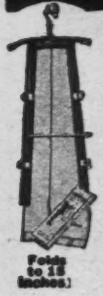

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ice. "Jervis, take Miss Thomas over and show her the bank where the wild time grows."

An obese and distinguished theatrical manager piloted her across the room, stretched two fingers across the bank of greenery and became mysteriously possessed of a pair of frosted glasses.

"Mint juleps!" exclaimed Derry. "In this day and age. Marty's a genius."

Stimulated by the refreshment, the theatrical magnate claimed Derry's first dance and put in five minutes of puffy enthusiasm telling her that she certainly ought to be on the stage and that, if she wished an opening, she had only to come around any time. It was a method which he had found generally successful and he was surprised and grieved at this nonchalant flapper's cheery disregard of its flattering implications.

OTHER partners set up a brisk rivalry for her and she had switched perhaps a dozen times when she became aware that Willowdean, who had been continuously busy with her duties as semi-official hostess, was privately signaling. She managed to slip away to her. Willowdean's fairy loveliness was glazed over with the brilliance of stringent expectancy.

"Where's Blackie?"

"Blackie? *I* don't know."

"Hasn't he telephoned you?"

"No. Was he to have?"

The actress beat her wrists together in a nervous spasm. "Yes. I told him to. About tonight. Knowing that he couldn't get me at the theater."

"I haven't heard anything and I was in all evening."

"Derry, I've got to see him. I've had the most poisonous letter from him. He's going away."

"I told you he wouldn't understand your little missive."

Willowdean, after much painful consideration and not without tears had, in a spirit of contrition and fear—not for herself but for him—sent him a long letter of common sense intent, which she had shown to Derry. What she had not shown was an impulsive postscript, hardly in conformity with the sagely judicious spirit of what went before, since it read:

"Oh, Blackie, forget me. No, *don't!*"

"He's torturing himself," continued the actress uncertainly. "And there's nothing—I've done nothing—I don't know what he means by writing that way. He's like a crazy man."

"When's he going?"

"Tomorrow, he says. I've *got* to see him first. Derry dear, call him up."

"What! At this time of night?"

"He'll be at the laboratory. He's been working all night most nights, since—— He's killing himself, Derry."

Derry made a strange response to this. "Oh, you poor damn fool!" she said softly, pitifully. And she bent and, for the first time, kissed the other. Like so many highly feminized women, they were both by nature chary of caresses to their own sex.

"You'll do it, won't you? I've done something awfully nice for you tonight, you know."

Derry nodded, hardly heeding. She was troubled for her friend, perceiving dimly tragic possibilities now in what she had deemed at most an episodic adventure.

Over the 'phone, Walter Blakely's voice was so unnatural and strained that she was still more concerned. He pleaded stress of work.

"I do think you'd better come down here, if it's only for half an hour," she urged.

"Where are you?"

"At Martin's party. All of us."

"Do you think I'd come to *his* place?" he said with such envenomed bitterness that the real purport of his trouble was made lividly clear to her.

"But you have been here," she cried.

"That was before——"

"Before what?" she demanded as he failed to conclude the sentence.

He made no reply.

"What have you been hearing?" Then, as he still failed to answer she declared, vehement in her loyalty: "Whatever it is, it isn't true. How dare you think it, Blackie?"

Hardly had she said it when a blighting thought came to her—how did she know it was not true, that implication of Blakely's jealousy? Upon instinct alone she had flamed to defense of her friend. But what did she really know of the relations between Willowdean and Martin? She began to recall hints, innuendoes, smiling inferences not necessarily ill-natured, but which were the inevitable concomitants of any friendship between playwright and actress. Where was the truth? And in the name of all amazement, to what lengths had Willowdean and Blackie been carried? No matter. Whatever the situation might be, she would not go back on her defense of her friend. Her mind was still racing when Blackie said in a desolate voice:

"I'll come. In an hour."

Coming out from the telephone she was intercepted by Richard Otley. He was looking, more than ever, his impeccable, assured self. His smile, as ever, reserved something, thereby provoking the eternal feminine within her to inquiry.

"Do you know, Dick, that you narrowly escape being smug at times? You're awfully well satisfied with life."

"I'm not so well satisfied with life as I was seven weeks ago."

"Important date! Our fatal meeting. What more do you want?"

"Do you dare me to tell you?"

"I can stand anything tonight."

"Well, then: a following wind, and a course set for—for——"

"For 'that far bourne from whence no traveler e'er returns,'" she supplied lightly.

"That's for you to say."

"Dick, I wonder why it is that, in a way, I really want to go. Is it just the desperate sense of adventure in me? Every girl has got to be a pioneer into undiscovered country, once in her life, hasn't she?"

For the first time there was a tensity of feeling in his voice that stirred her. "Derry, I want you more than I've ever wanted anything in this world! You believe that, don't you?"

"Yes," she murmured. She kept on believing it afterward, when all other be-

lief in him was burned to ashes of light derision and mockery. "But I'd have to be awfully sure."

"Of what? Of me? Haven't I proved to you that you can trust me?"

"Y-yes. That was clever of you. Oh," as he made an impatient gesture, "I'm not slurring it. That's the kind of cleverness that gets to a woman."

"And there's nothing in the world I wouldn't do to win you. Nothing! You understand that, too, don't you?"

"What romantic recklessness," she smiled. "The untrapped bachelor ready to compromise his freedom. Am I ready, yet, to compromise mine? . . . I'll go this far, Dick, you needn't put the sloop in dry-dock yet."

"It wouldn't be that sloop," he murmured. "It would be a yacht big enough to go anywhere."

"No, the sloop or nothing. I'll take all the chances if I take any."

The light quickened in his fine eyes. "You adorable thing."

"Am I? I love to be told so. It gives you such a warm, comfy feeling inside."

"Egoist!"

"Guilty," she returned in the same tone. She half rose from her seat as Walter Blakely appeared in the doorway, but dropped back. She had caught sight of Willowdean, had seen the light of a secret fire flash and wane in the beautiful face. The two met and passed on into a side room, supposedly seeking the host. Then Derry beheld a more startling sight.

"Who," she interrogated Otley, "is the red-faced man that's got Sara McIntyre crowded into a corner?"

"Haven't an idea. I never saw him before."

"*Haven't* you? Well, I have. He's the swimmer from the rock who tried to race us in!"

"Suffering snakes! Has he recognized you?"

"Not yet. And I don't want him to. Find out who he is, will you, like a dear? Meantime, I'll shrink into the shrubbery and wait."

Accordingly she shrunk, amusing herself with a game of concealment. When she was congratulating herself that even a hawk couldn't have found her, footsteps passing by halted, advanced, stopped again. A voice, directed at her, gave her a queer, jumpy little sensation of warmth:

"It either is you or it isn't. If it isn't, I'm going home mad."

Willowdean's "something awfully nice" that she said she's done for me—thought Derry. For the time she had forgotten. Well, it was nice to hear Tony Landor's voice again, with that not-quite-suppressed eagerness in it.

"You must have X-ray eyes," she remarked. "How did you ever see me?"

"I didn't, at first. I was searching for you and I caught a whiff of that faint, bewildering perfume that you use. If I hadn't found you——" he added, leaving to conjecture the horrific alternative.

"Life would have been a ruin, wouldn't it?" she finished for him. "Yet I haven't noticed you breaking any speed laws trying to catch up with me lately."

"I've been away ever since the ball game. That's a lie, by the way," he added with perfect cheerfulness, "and I'm afraid this is my fatal evening for being the young George Washington."

"When are you going to begin?"

"Presently. Give me a start by telling me whom you've been hiding from."

"Principally that semi-intoxicated youth who is talking Sara McIntyre into a stupor."

Landor turned to look. "Charley Corcoran? Has he been trying to fasten himself on you?"

"No," said Derry, and was about to add, "I don't know him," when some fore-instinct of perilous complications stopped her. "And I don't want him to," she substituted. "He seems an extraordinary sort of creature."

"The only extraordinary thing about him is that he's sober enough at this hour to have speech and motion left. When in condition he is known as the champion bean-spiller of New York and suburbs. As a gatherer and dispenser of social dirt he is in a class by himself. It's uncanny the way he picks things up, and unholy the way he always tells 'em in the wrong place. Who the devil is this butt-in?"

It was Otley returning. He was looking worried, and seemed annoyed at Tony's presence, try as he did to conceal the fact.

Derry spoke first. With her best smile she said to Otley, "Dick, I've got a rotten job for you."

"Draw up the specifications. I've found out about Red-face."

"So have I. Mr. Landor—you two have met, haven't you—says that he is always on the brink of total alcoholic extinction at this hour. It's your painful duty to push him over." She gave him a significant glance which tacitly added, "before he gets too talkative."

"This place is too public," objected Landor, after Otley had gone. "Aren't there any caves on this mountain peak?"

She led him around a masked chimney to the roof's coping and down a passage which terminated in a bench and a pinned curtain. "How about this?"

With difficulty he spelled out a faintly visible road sign which Cole must have lifted on some auto trip—

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Derry made a face at it. "I wonder if any one under the age of a hundred ever turned back for that warning?"

Already he had unpinned the curtain. "It seems to be the end of something." He stepped in. "Stay back," he warned, "this leads to the street—a couple of hundred feet down."

"Is there room for two to sit down?"

"IF THEY'RE careful—and close. It's a fire escape terminus."

"Then I'm coming."

Cautiously she seated herself with her back against an abutment, he beyond her. From somewhere not very near sounded faint, hilarious voices, an intermittent popping, and once, a crash of glass. The improvised barroom was having a rush of business.

"I want to put up a problem to you," he said. "Ever since that day at the ball game I've had an insane desire to take you in my arms and kiss you."

"Insane?" she murmured. "You're not too flattering. It's been done before by some quite sane people."

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Checked by the flippancy—how far was it real?—he leaned back studying her face, dim and exquisite with that quality of eerie loveliness which half-light gives to a certain type; the inscrutable half-smile, the clear and fearless and questing eyes. Those lips—if he dared—he knew so well in his hurrying blood how they might cleave, shivering-sweet, to the touch of his. Yet he was afraid, not of being repulsed, but of blank disillusionment. That risk was not for him.

"I told you before that if I saw you again it would be purpose and not chance."

"And then you never appeared until, by chance, you run across me here."

"It wasn't chance. It was Willowdean French."

"Willowdean's a crook," declared Derry with more dignity than veracity. "She should have given me warning."

"You see, I'd been trying pretty hard to forget you, but you wouldn't stay forgot. So I closed my desk one day and took you walking half the length of Manhattan Island. You were a tougher problem than any I shut into my desk."

"The eternal mystery of woman," she gibed. "Tony, do you realize that your stuff paid duty when the custom's officer met Noah at the pier?"

"I know it's old stuff. Love always is."

It was said so casually, so much with the effect of voicing an established fact, that Derry did not even blink. "You deal in big words."

"I have been dealing with a big issue—the biggest—and I'm not making out too well. Derry, I don't like women. That is, I like 'em well enough in their place, but I don't want to get that trouble mixed up with my other problems until——"

"Is that why you sent your wife away?" She had yielded to the perverse or perhaps defensive instinct to bring Mrs. Landor into their talk.

"I didn't send her away," he responded evenly.

"Does she interfere with your business?"

"Not noticeably."

"You don't really like my speaking of her, do you? That isn't very sporting of you."

"I don't in the least mind, if it amuses you."

"It doesn't," said Derry. "It bores me. You might be more amusing if you didn't have a wife. You'd certainly be more dangerous. If you weren't a summer bachelor, I should chuck you before you had a chance to get dangerous—and while you still held that insane desire you boast of under perfect control."

Ah, that was a little more than he would stand from her! And now she was slowly, tantalizingly lifting her face. Invitation? Unquestionably. He burningly longed to crush her to him hard and close, to taste from that smiling, waiting mouth the fire and sweetness of her youth. He drew his arm across her shoulder, leaned slowly to her lips.

Inconceivably the figure which he clasped had become that of a statue, inert, rigid, lifeless. By what black art of girlhood had she, without movement or word, set up an impalpable barrier? Should he draw back—or go on?

Derry, conscious of her own power to create that atmosphere, intensely sensitive to its effects, felt his bewilderment and vaunted herself upon her success. He deserved to be bedeviled. He should kiss her and find her an ice-maiden in his arms. She would teach him not to expect to play the leisurely and conquering male with her!

"Afraid," she taunted and tempted.

"Deadly afraid," he returned with utter seriousness.

"That's sane. *And* safe. Still . . ."

She leaned to him a little, and he to meet her. Their lips touched, and in a flash, by a golden miracle of sweetness, the statue came alive and athrill in his arms.

What had befallen Derry, the ice-maiden, the self-assured, the too boastful? Something of the wholly unexpected in his slow approach had disarmed her; the controlled passion of his look, the very gentleness of the lips that had hardly more than touched hers at first, until—until, without conscious volition her hands had gone to his face, drawing it down upon hers.

After the brief moment's shock, the uncontrollable surrender, Derry drew back, breathing quickly, dismayed, quivering. She felt changed and wondering and a little frightened. With Bev she had not been frightened. With Otley she had been at all times in command of herself. Now she knew she could care, and she was afraid of caring, afraid of an unknown more portentous than any that had loomed before her in previous experiences.

Tony Landor spoke first in a shaken voice. "I never meant to do that. Sorry, Derry."

"I don't know whether *I* am or not." She lifted her eyes to his like a child in a dim place, wondering, venturing, half-afraid.

"It's all right, dear." His hand dropped over hers, not drawing her, but remaining there, still and quietly protective.

She lifted her head sharply, arrested in her thoughts by a tumult of voices beyond the barrier.

"What's happening now?"

A HOARSE and Bacchic barytone from the improvised barroom raised itself above the chorus in lament and accusation.

"Some son-of-a-cat has put something into my mint julep."

"The uncorkable Corcoran," remarked Landor, grinning. "You've wished a rough job on Otley."

"Take it away," continued the voice. "Take it away an' show me the son-of—I *won't* shush. I wanna tell you an' I'm goin' to tell you, oneanall, that girl was a pip, a dream, a lovebird an' a knock-out."

A second voice said something indistinguishable at the distance.

"I'm gonna tell you about my deep-sea girlie, b'fore I go any further. There she sat, on the wearrerail—the weath-er-rail—with her hair flyin' and her eyes laughin at me, and the risin' sun on her face, and *such* a face! A siren, I'm tellin' you! A—a—heart-crusher if ever there was one."

"Would you know her if you saw her again?" some one asked.

"Know her? I'd love her! I'd *marry*

her. Even if she *was* out all night with nurrer feller, sportin' on the moonlit waves. *I'm* gonna buy a yacht, soon as I find that glory-girl." The exuberant voice fell to a note of depression. "I'm combin' New York for her, but I can't find her anywhere. When I do——"

Thought Derry—that means I've got to stick here until he's gone, or sunk. Why doesn't Dick work faster?

Another voice was shouting repeatedly: "All out for the great event of the evening: the Champagne Fandango. Those that don't come out will be dug out by a squad of sappers and miners."

"Not me," said Derry quickly. "I'm not feeling fandangoish."

"Nor I," said Tony. He reached through the curtains to take down the sign. "Nobody's likely to get this far," he said. "Sit tight." His admonition dropped to a whisper. "Here's a searching party."

Footsteps, hesitant and exploratory, drew near. "Here," said a man's accents, harsh and low and strained, outside.

"There won't be time. Can't you wait till tomorrow, Blackie dear?" No mistaking the quality of Willowdean's voice. There was that in it now which gave Derry a start, a forehint of fear.

"No. Tonight. You've got to answer me tonight. If I go now I shan't come back. I can't live on uncertainties, perhaps deceit——"

"*Deceit!* Blackie. Between you and me?"

"Do you know what it's cost me to come here tonight—here to Cole's apartment where you are—hostess?"

"Say what you started to say, Blackie." There was no anger in the soft, dolorous voice; only resolution and forbearance.

"I can't."

"Must I, then? Do you mean, am I Marty's mistress?"

Silence.

"I'm not," said she simply. "I'm nobody's, but yours. I couldn't be."

"But—but before we knew each other?"

Willowdean spoke with infinite pity, infinite gentleness as to a suffering child, but with the clear pride of candor, too. "I never pretended to be what is called a 'good woman,' dear. Have you been torturing yourself with my past?"

"How could I help it! When you are everything in life to me! My brain has been burning with all the fires of hell."

"Ah, *don't,* my dear! . . . I think I've got to tell you. How can I bear to tell you when it's going to hurt you so; when it's going to hurt me so to hurt you! Oh, Blackie! I'd have thought you could understand," she murmured grievously.

"I understand nothing, except that you've absorbed every hope of happiness I have into yourself."

"Take hold of my hands. Both of them. . . Yes, like that. Hurt me if you want to; if it helps. There isn't so much to tell. It was Rob Whitehall first. We were both kids, he in his senior year, and the most winning, irresponsible creature that ever breathed. I was mad about him, as a recklessly sentimental child of eighteen would be. His family wouldn't have it. It was a case of waiting for three years before we could be married without making an awful mess of things, and—we didn't wait." She added in a strange convinced tone of defiant loyalty, "I've never been sorry. Not for an instant. Does that seem terribly shameless to you? . . . Rob died the next year. The family sent for me, but I got there too late to be married to him."

"Did you love him?" asked the man's choked voice.

"AS A girl loves, passionately, unthinkingly. Not as a woman can love. After his death I thought that I could never love again; that that side of life was closed to me. And yet—I did. No need of names; he was a man that the world calls a great man, and he is a great man, a man who has given much to the world and had small return in happiness. I gave him happiness, ungrudgingly. It was one of those discreet, occasional relationships that sometimes can be kept quite secret; and it lasted nearly three years, before his work took him permanently abroad. There's never been any one else, though of course I know people talk about Marty and me. Then you came—and I knew how terribly mistaken I'd been—and for the first time I was ashamed." She paused, then said slowly: "Even before we were lovers, Blackie, I had given you more of myself than I'd ever dreamed I could give. . . And *now*—what are you going to do with me, dear one?"

He said: "Come away with me. Now."

"Where?"

"Anywhere. To the other end of the world."

"You're quite mad. It would ruin you—your work."

"What does that matter! Nothing matters but you."

"Oh, no, no! We couldn't. I care too much to spoil life for you. And that's what it would be. Lover, my lover! Let's just go on as we are—dreaming."

"But the awakening—here——"

"I know, I know." The under-sob in her voice was one of dread and foreboding. "I realize that it's got to come. But why not take what happiness there is while we can? And never, never think there could be any one else, Blackie!" she finished in a desperate whisper.

The unwilling listeners heard the stiffled moan of longing with which she clasped and kissed him before they moved away. Said Tony in a low voice:

"That's rather terrible."

"It's disastrous," whimpered Derry. "I'm frightened, Tony."

"Because you've been an onlooker at the mysteries," he returned gravely. "The big realities are always terrifying. And I'm afraid this is pretty big."

"What's to be done about it? I'm so afraid for her."

"I suppose it's got to be stopped—some way."

Instantly she was in revolt, at bay in the cause of her friend.

"Why should it? Hasn't she a right to happiness? Can't you think of the woman a little, too?"

"There's another woman to be considered, Derry."

"His wife? Why doesn't she stick to him then?" she challenged.

Said Landor hesitantly: "She isn't very well. She never has been since their

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marriage. It's been a queer marriage. In fact, it hasn't been much of a marriage at all."

Derry pondered and presently understood. "Oh, poor Blackie! And poor Willowdean! I want to think. About things—private things. Alone, if you don't mind. Will you leave me here for a while, Tony? And I'll join you presently."

"Promise? You won't spread your moth-wings and fly away from me across the roof tops?"

"PROMISED." She gave him a little push, like an abrupt caress, and closed the portières after him.

Derry sat, bemused above the humming city. It seemed suddenly a very huge, irresistible current of life, and woman-creatures like Willowdean and herself such flimsy straws in its course. In what direction, to what ends, were they being swept by forces at which she could but dimly guess? Were the greater forces within or without themselves? How were they balanced and opposed? What unguessed chances——

The blatant bray of Corcoran, the champion bean-spiller, cut short her philosophizings, a voice raised in acclaim:

"And here's good ole Tony Landor. Lemme be! I won't go home till I've had a drink with him. The most uncatchable bachelor in New York. How d'you duck the piffals—the—the pitfalls *and* the gins, Tony, ole thing? There's only a few of us left and I'm slippin' rapidly. A—a sea-fairy did it; a sea-farin' sea-fairy. Good, ay? Now lessava drink together, you and ole Otley and me, to the joys and dangers of bach-hood."

Derry sat, with her brain a-buzz. Tony Landor a bachelor! Why had he let her think—— Why had he lied to her? Why—why—why—a thousand whys!

Corcoran was saying: "Aw right. I'm movin' on. Gotta look further for my sea-farin' sea-fairy. Where's m' hat? Goo' night oneanall. I ain't feelin' so well. Some son-of-a-cat put——" and the Bacchic voice was shut off by a closing door.

So the calamitous bean-spiller was gone. Derry could brave the lights again.

She emerged to find Tony waiting for her.

CHAPTER XII

THE party upon which Derry now blinked was at the height of its final stage. In the middle of the floor a wealthy and pretentious first-nighter, a bankrupt star and a portly female playbroker were absorbed in a cork-race. The lady was accusing the star of having surreptitiously shaken up his bottle, which is as nefarious as doping a horse. Sara McIntyre and Beverly Greenway had blacked up and were playing a scene from "All God's Chillun Got Wings"—with variations—directed by Max Zindler who, in less private life, was the most urbanely dignified of bankers. A fat critic was asleep in an armchair. Preston Smith, astoundingly sober, was putting a class through a series of calisthenics improvised by himself. Otley, weary but unruffled by his long and finally successful bout with the uncorkable Corcoran, was helping Mary Bennington make cheese sandwiches which she rapidly sold for a dollar each in aid of some worthy charity whose name she had forgotten but would write, so she promised, to every purchaser on the following day.

It all jangled rawly on Derry. She wanted to get away somewhere and think quietly. About Willowdean and Walter Blakely. About the revelation of Tony's status. About herself. She wanted to go home. And there was Tony blocking the way.

"You're looking a little done," said he solicitously as she came into the light.

"That eavesdropping gave me a jar. And I've just had another. You let me believe that there was a Mrs. Landor."

"You chose to believe it yourself. Besides, there is."

"*Are* you married or are you not, Tony Landor?"

"I—am—not."

"That first day in the store you were having some things sent to Mrs. Landor."

"Right. That was my sister-in-law and self-appointed guardian. Is it my fault if you assumed it was my wife?"

"It's your fault that you let me go on believing it."

"I had my reasons."

"What are they?"

"By advice of counsel, Miss Willowdean French, I decline to answer."

"What are you and Willowdean up to? Did she tell you to play married? Why?"

"Is this a cross-examination or a barrage? As to why, it was so that I wouldn't be chucked from your summer bachelors' scheme. We're on a new basis now. I refuse to be chucked."

"We aren't. We aren't on any basis at all. What basis do you think we're on?"

"Difficult to define at present. As for the future—I'm going to marry you."

"*Are* you! I somehow don't think you are. And is Willowdean in on this little scheme?"

"Certainly. She's for it, strong."

"My friends seem to have a bug on marrying me off. As if I were a public peril to be got out of the way as soon as possible. Well, go ahead, all of you—if you think you can get away with it."

"Is that a challenge?"

"It's a bet, if you like."

Derry was sobered by the change to an abrupt gravity with which he answered: "I'm not taking bets on my life's happiness."

"But I don't want you to take it so seriously," she protested. A voice within her straightway accused and convicted her of lying. "I'm not going to marry anybody."

With a sudden, perverse inspiration she added maliciously, "Except maybe Dick Otley."

To her amazement, gratification and dismay, the color sunk out of his face. "Are you engaged to Otley?"

"No. But that doesn't make any difference. If I've got you right, you're the kind of man that would leave a woman nothing of herself if she loved you."

"A tyrant?"

"Nothing so intentional as that. It's a different quality, an—an absorbent quality. You've got the absorbing type of

personality, of—" she lowered her voice —"of masculinity. I couldn't bear to be absorbed. Can't you understand that, Tony?"

"All I get is that if you ever felt yourself falling in love, you'd run away. That's cowardly, isn't it?"

"It isn't love that I'm running away from—necessarily. It's marriage. No, Tony dear. It really won't do. After tonight we're both going to give an imitation of expert forgetting."

"Is it as bad as that?" he asked with a curious lift in his words.

"It sounds almost like a confession, doesn't it? Take it as you like. I wonder what's become of Willowdean. You've made me almost forget her. Do you know where she is?"

"Helping with some mysterious kitchen rite. You can see her through here—— what's happening over yonder?"

Derry too had become aware of a minor commotion, a minor sensation, in the direction of the door. She left Tony and walked across to bring into view a slim, dark, dainty woman of perhaps thirty, with a mouth of quite infantile softness and poutiness and a pair of eyes, which, by their glowing, quick-moving brilliance, belied every implication of the mouth. In a voice proper to the mouth rather than the eyes, languid and appealing and provocative, she inquired:

"Hasn't this party got any host? Or did it just grow this way?"

"Call for Martin Cole!" "*Mister* Cole!" "Marty, you're being wanted by a stray angel."

"One minute," shouted the playwright. "I'm opening something."

Max Zindler stepped forward. "Queen of the night," he said with a low and sober bow, "if it isn't a compromising question, who are you?"

"Never mind that now. If this is a good party I want to be in on it."

"One moment, please," interposed Max Zindler. "Would you deign to explain how you got here?"

"Well, you see," she said with a wide and confidential smile that took them all in, "there was a sound of revelry by night, and the party I was at on the twelfth floor began to die on me, and I met a totally lost gent'man strolling in the hallway——"

"Cholly Corcoran," said some one.

"Probably. So I threw him down the elevator shaft, and with his dying gasp of gratitude he invited me to this party. Is it sufficient?"

"All those in favor of it being sufficient——" began Max.

In the midst of the crash of ayes, Tony Landor came up behind Derry. "What are they voting on?" he asked, and immediately added, "Good Lord? How did Claire Elway get here?"

"Who's Claire Elway?"

"She's the very devil!" declared Tony with a deep conviction which managed to convey an undertone of admiration.

"Mrs. or Miss?"

"She's got a legal husband somewhere, I believe, but no one ever sees 'em together here. They live in Washington, Santa Barbara, Paris and way stations, and use New York to fatten their batting averages."

Martin Cole had appeared and was courteously making his new guest welcome, through the agency of a stein of champagne. "You've come just in time," he said. "The party was threatening to become respectable but the command is about to be taken over by Prenny Smith." He waved an introductory hand toward that gentleman who had entered, followed by Willowdean. "Making you well and favorably acquainted with Mr. Preston Smith."

But already the visitor was describing what appeared to be a long, curved flight through the air, terminating upon Mr. Smith's receptive neck. "Prenny-of-my-heart!" she gurgled. "Think of finding you here! What are you doing in that apron?"

He kissed her firmly and set her down. "Hard-boiling four dozen eggs."

"What for?"

"You guess."

She pondered, pouting her childish lips in intellectual concentration. "Let's cogitate. The scrambled egg is the sign and symbol of late hours and depravity, the world over, just as the soft-boiled egg is of breakfast, and home ties, and respectability." She broke off to wave a joyous hand. "Why, there's Tony Landor! It's years since I've seen you, Tony. This *is* a party! . . . But the hard-boiled egg means the Great Outdoors, the vast Open Spaces where men are men and God help the wom—I mean, all poor sailors at sea on such a night. Prenny, *is* it a picnic?"

"You win. The most penetrating mentality in America," he explained, showman fashion. "A picnic it is, intellectual giantess. Starting fifteen minutes from now, on Central Park Lake."

"You can't," objected voices. "The boats'll be locked." "What about the police?"

"AM I, or am I not an alderman? The police are fixed, the boats are loosed!"

"Look at Otley," whispered Tony in Derry's ear. "He's bewitched."

So it appeared. Derry's nautical suitor had stepped through an opening in the shrubbery wall, and now stood in amazement, staring at the new arrival. As if she had palpably felt his regard, she slowly turned her head sidewise; her piquant face changed and lightened as her eyes rested on Otley. She spoke in her clear, tuneful voice.

"What? Another? Where have I seen that face before? Can it be? It is; it *is!* My long lost husband that I haven't set eyes on for a week. 'Lo, Dickie Elway!"

NEXT MONTH

With her bachelor suitor safely married, and her married suitor a dangerous bachelor, Derry Thomas is in a state of bewilderment. One thing is clear to her, however—she must get away from the too-distracting Tony Landor. Derry lays her plans accordingly—but first she spends a hilarious morning with him at the picnic in Central Park.

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Stand By for Roxy—Continued from page 63

straight through from the jazz to the classics, from the "Hello everybody," to the "Good-night, God bless you."

But I have a confession to make. With all this broadcasting experience of mine, I'm no authority on radio. I know as much about coils, springs, and the mechanics of it all as George Bernard Shaw does about playing the ukulele. I receive questions daily asking me to recommend some good set—which obviously I cannot do. People want me to tell them how to build cheap sets at home, or how to fix their sets when they break. I wish I knew how to fix my own.

IT'S funny, the idea people get of you through hearing your voice. Some expect me to be either older or younger than I am. And others appear surprised, when they see me, that I'm not six feet tall, with a flowing tie, brown eyes, and tan shoes.

At a reception held for the gang in a New England dry-goods' store, two nice little flappers came in and said they wanted to meet me. When I was introduced they looked at me steadily for a moment, and then said in unison, *"Applesauce!"*

Now, what could they have meant by that! If they read this, I hope they'll write me and explain. That was one time when I wished I looked like Valentino.

But on the other hand I received a letter from a little girl named Mary. She had been given a doll for her birthday, and on the eventful occasion coaxed her parents to let her stay up later than her usual bedtime. It happened to be an evening when I was on the air, and one of the songs was called "Mary." The youngster was so pleased and excited that—as she wrote me—she took the hair ribbons off the girl doll and rechristened it "Roxy."

And, speaking of children, the whole gang of us feels that we're godfather to the first "radio baby." Mr. and Mrs. Geoffrey O'Hara—we always point to Geoff as the composer of "K-K-K-Katie"—are now the proud parents of a blue-eyed girl. When Mrs. O'Hara was in the hospital I told Geoff's friends on the air about the happy event. Thousands of people sent telegrams and flowers, addressed to the "radio baby." When her mother brings her up she might change the old saying to "children should be heard and not seen—and maybe you'll grow up to be a radio artist."

Mardi Gras Madness—Continued from page 55

and he gave it to his lady. *'Gardez la Foi'* is its motto. 'Keep faith,' he said, and she kissed the ring. And when he came back from the wars she had kept faith and the ring had not been opened—the draught had not been drunk. Later the bold knight himself received a token from his lady, a ring precisely like it, on his birthday. For the knight had seemingly forgot that he, too, must keep the faith."

"And his ring—was it ever opened?"

"The bold knight died, I am sorry to say. And his ring had been opened—the philter had been drunk. But ever afterwards the rings remained in our family as tokens of unbroken faith and fidelity. The motto has never since been dishonored—and even that once, dishonor was cleansed by death. And so—back to our dancing, lady, for you say I am a philanderer. But let me kiss the ring!"

"You have the other one?"

"Yes. Now let us go before——"

He did not finish the sentence, but hastened to lead her back to the ballroom. Millicent struggled to dispel the illusion that overwhelmed her.

"And your troubadour craves forgiveness," she heard her masker saying, "if he has permitted himself to be tempted and to forget."

They danced again, and still Millicent could not fight off the soft glamour of unreality. Before she could realize that he was gone, her troubadour had escorted her back to her party, bowed to kiss her hand, and vanished among the dancers. Then she clutched Constance Garnett's arm and whispered, "Who was that?"

"Yes, wouldn't I like to know?" cried Constance. "Do you know how long you have been sitting out with him? Four dances!"

"Oh, was it that long?" Millicent was dazed. "We just went out on a little gallery to see the sta—the maskers in the street."

"Well, we didn't plan to spend the evening here," said Constance with forced severity. "These poor black-coats we have with us want to go somewhere else, where they can dance."

"Oh, of course. I'm dreadfully sorry."

The party proceeded to another place where dancing was in progress. There was no masking there, only formal evening wear, and to Millicent it seemed a drab descent from poetry to prose. This was stupid reality, the other had been a vague imagining. Yet her lips, her fingers tingled still from caresses which had been hotly real—and there on her finger was the strange black ring, ancient and crudely carved, with its motto, *"Gardez la Foi!"* A cool and rational Millicent kept telling herself she was an unwary fool who had been duped; but a new Millicent, warm and emotional, protested, "This is Mardi Gras—make-believe perhaps—but what if it were *not* perhaps . . ."

He had said she was unattainable, but that was merely his way of saying it was only a game he was playing. The thought made her resentful. Did Constance know who he was?

"Why, I haven't the slightest idea," cried Constance, delightfully excited, when she saw the ring. "But of course I would not tell you if I knew, Millicent, dear. It wouldn't be fair."

"It really doesn't matter," said Milli-

cent, archly withholding details. "The ring is a keepsake that ought to be returned to him, that's all. I shouldn't have accepted it."

"Unquestionably it has a great sentimental value! Any masker who will let one girl, a strange one, monopolize his whole evening——"

"Oh, well——" said Millicent. "Good-night, dear."

She slept with the ring close to her lips, and perchance that is why she dreamed, not vividly but hazily, of bold knights riding off to the wars, and a troubadour singing beneath a wistful moon to a lady who found the beauty of his song so hurtful that it moved her to tears.

And when the maid awakened her for *petit déjeuner* at an unholy hour of morning, there came, along with the coffee and crisp French rolls, a great box of roses to be laid tenderly on her bed. It was a box that bore not even the florist's name, and inscribed on the card enclosed were only the words, *"Gardez la Foi!"*

They were days of unceasing gayety that led down the week's path of dalliance to Mardi Gras, the climax of it all. Millicent enjoyed the excitement, but she was principally controlled by an eager expectancy of something she wanted to happen. But it did not happen. She did not see her troubadour.

There were more roses, however, with cards admonishing her to keep the faith. And twice during carnival balls at which she was marked for the unheard-of honor of three and four call-outs, her partners whispered the motto in her ear, adding merely, "I was told you would understand."

Constance and Eula Hawthorne could not understand; possibly were a trifle envious.

"Whoever your smitten cavalier is," decided Constance, "he has friends and influence. I'll bet he's some shy chap who is afraid to declare his consuming love."

"He isn't—what you would call—shy," demurred Millicent.

"Then perhaps he's a married man," suggested Eula maliciously.

That was enough to infuriate Millicent. "I don't care what he is, or who he is!" she declared vehemently. "I don't care, I tell you! I don't care!"

"Now I'm beginning to believe you *do* care!" accused Eula, with surprised and comprehending eyes. "Why, I've never seen you excited like this before! I didn't mean to hurt you, dear."

"I'm not excited. I'm just upset!" And Millicent left the room precipitately.

That was why Constance was dubious about calling her to the telephone, on the day before Mardi Gras, when a strange voice asked for Millicent. It was the voice of a man who declined to give his name.

Millicent tried hard to achieve a nonchalant tone when the voice on the wire whispered, "Gardez la Foi!"

"So it's you, is it?" She hated the words for their inanity, but her heart was jumping rope so madly that she could think of nothing more pointed to say.

"Tomorrow at noon at the Old Absinthe House," said the voice, still *sotto voce*, as though some one might overhear. "Will you be there?"

"Certainly not!" exclaimed Millicent, indignantly. "If you care to see me you may call, at my hostess's home."

"I think you will be there," said the voice. "If you come masked, wear a yellow one. Then I shall not miss you. I shall not be masked. Good-bye, dear!"

That was all. But it left Millicent flushed, staring, speechless.

The impudence of the man! Millicent felt the smart of wounded pride and disappointment. Yet she did not go to Constance, as she was impelled to do on the spur of the moment, and tell her how coldly she proposed to spurn this overture. A motive which she was pleased to ascribe to curiosity led her to the purchase of a yellow silk mask.

It was quite the smart thing to do, to go "slumming" at Mardi Gras. Under cover of a mask one might stray adventurously into all sorts of places where one would never be seen, masked or unmasked, during the other fifty-one weeks of the year. The whole town went skylarking on Mardi Gras Day, the merry-mad finale of the season of I-don't-care. Tomorrow would be Ash Wednesday, and there would be all the forty days of Lent to repent in sackcloth and ashes.

Comforted by the conviction that her only wish, now, was to satisfy her indignant curiosity, Millicent, about noon, led the party unobtrusively to the vicinity of the old French Quarter. It was an easy matter for her, becoming separated from the others, to lose herself in the crowd on the streets. And the Old Absinthe House, with its two hundred years of celebrity, was not hard to find.

The place was thronged with volubly chattering patrons, some of them masked, some masked and costumed, some in ordinary attire. Shrill voices shot up in sudden geysers of speech above the babble. Masked ladies sat in masked gentlemen's laps, or lounged insouciantly at the bar.

Stunned by the confusion, Millicent paused in the doorway. Her timidity betrayed her. Men ogled her, jostled her with clumsy familiarity.

"Come on in, sweetie, the fire-water's fine," yelled a pink domino.

She found herself pushed into the middle of the place, surrounded by noisy celebrants. She was genuinely frightened. Then a voice whispered in her ear, "Gardez la Foi!" and swelled to a roar for the benefit of others:

"OUT o' the way, you fools! This lady's frien' o' mine!"

The man was not masked—a handsome face, flushed and bloated by dissipation, bloodshot eyes, a proud chin that Millicent thought she had seen before, but lips that were snarling and one-sided.

"C'mon, sweetheart. Lash sit 't table. Wanna talk to you!"

His left hand sought hers in an awkward attempt at gallantry, and on his little finger was the duplicate of the black death-philter ring.

"Take your hands off me!" cried Millicent. He was forcing her through the chuckling, jeering crowd, toward one of the tables. "Please! Please! Somebody get me out of this place!"

Help came with surprising promptness.

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A man who had evidently entered directly after Millicent forced his way through the crowd.

"Fool! Idiot! *Cochon!*" Millicent's companion staggered back astonished as the newcomer struck him a resounding blow on the cheek. "Up to your old tricks, are you! Well, by heaven, you're going home now and stay there!" With that he pushed the dazed but obedient chap into a chair. "Now wait here, damn you!"

He turned to Millicent with a little bow and said, sorrowfully, "I am heartbroken, *mademoiselle*. I had hoped to prevent this."

He escorted her through a side door to the street, and stopped a taxicab. Millicent, breathless with the excitement of the last few minutes, had found herself unable to utter a word. Now she struggled to remember something—she had seen this dark-eyed, courtly young person before. With a flash it came to her. He was the man she and Eula had seen on the train.

He was gone in a twinkling, after helping her into the cab.

A block down the street, Millicent caught sight of the others of her party. She dismissed the cab and joined them, and almost fell into Constance's arms, crying, "I want to go home! I want to go home!"

And not until they were home again could she begin to explain just what had happened. Constance and Eula assured her that anything might happen at Mardi Gras, that nobody meant any harm, and it was all just an accident. They could not understand why Millicent remained in her room all afternoon.

"Poor girl, it just upset her dignity," diagnosed Eula.

If Eula had known that her dark-eyed, handsome man of the train had obtruded himself into the carnival plot, she might have questioned Millicent more searchingly. But Millicent did not supply this detail. That was just it. Millicent didn't feel there was anybody she could tell anything to—she was so hurt and so ashamed.

Ashamed of what? For whom? She had slipped the black ring from her finger and threw it contemptuously into a drawer. Then she took it out again. She would not wear the thing, but she would keep it. She might meet its despicable owner again, and then she would do what she should have done today—throw it in his face. So much for his honor and his motto. Keep faith!

She strung the death-philter ring on a little gold chain to wear around her neck. It is not at all to the point that things thus hidden fall quite near the heart.

There was one final ball to attend, and then the hateful season of Mardi Gras would be at an end. She would see it through, and then, thank heaven, she could go back to a place where men were not so glib. And, armored with a chill cynicism, she permitted herself to be borne forth for the final ordeal.

Anything may happen at Mardi Gras. It is so written, and none in *La Nouvelle Orléans* will deny it. Anything may happen, and it is not wholly incredible that Millicent should have been kidnaped, boldly and in the sight of Canal Street multitudes, on Mardi Gras night itself.

Congested traffic ahead had brought the procession to a halt, and the maskers on the float nearest Millicent and her party were shouting the names of persons they recognized. Millicent heard her name called, and she smiled at the masker who beckoned to her, a graceful person in Bacchanalian garb who occupied a place near the base of the float. The throng had pressed so close that the float was scarcely six feet away.

"Come, fair one, let me whisper a secret," challenged the masker.

Moved by a spirit of perversity, Millicent ventured past the line of spectators to the corner of the float. A broad flight of stairs ending within two feet of the ground represented the approach to a classic temple, and at the edge of the steps the masker greeted her with extended hand. With a sudden jerk, the float started off, and Millicent, yielding to the impulse of the strong hand, sprang to the steps to avoid falling. Then she was aghast to find herself the object of a thousand eyes, a lone girl riding a Mardi Gras float with strange masked revelers. She moved to leap from the steps, but the masker's hand stayed her.

"It's too steep—we're going too fast! Don't try it—we've only two or three blocks to go." He fumbled in the folds of his costume. "Here, put on this mask. Then you won't mind."

She donned it hastily. Constance and the others, who had waved at her gaily and laughingly when the float started off with its unwilling passenger, had disappeared from the spot, now fifty yards away, where they had been standing.

"I'm sorry," said the masked bacchant. "I really didn't mean to abduct you. But I did want to apologize, and I was afraid——"

"Apologize? For——" Millicent stopped with a sharp exclamation of dismay, for on the little finger of the masker's left hand was the mate of the black death-philter ring.

"Oh! It's you! Again!" Millicent's tone was one of loathing. "Stop this wagon—I demand it! Let me off, immediately!"

"Gladly, but you must listen first, Millicent."

"Don't you dare speak to me! I despise you!"

"Dear little girl, you can't understand how much I——"

"Stop it!" Millicent clapped her hands over her ears. "I won't listen to your insults!"

WHEN the float came to a halt, presently, near the French Opera, she was unutterably relieved to see Constance and the others waiting for her. They had come by a circuitous route, avoiding the crowds.

Millicent stepped from the float, scorning the proffered aid of the masker, and unclasped something at her throat. Then she confronted him with blazing eyes, and almost in one gesture tore the mask from his face and dashed a black ring to the ground. Then she stepped back in dismay and amazement. The man who stood before her was the man she had seen on the train—the man who had befriended her at the Old Absinthe House.

He stood pale with humiliation. A blow in the face is not an insult so gross as the snatching away of a carnival mask. He bowed stiffly, retrieved the fallen mask and the ring, and disappeared in the crowd.

Constance caught sight of his face as she made her way to her guest. "Millicent, Millicent, why did you do that?" she cried in genuine agitation. "He will never, never forgive us!"

"Do you know him?" asked Millicent dazedly.

"I—I can't answer that question, dear," faltered Constance.

"You mean you won't tell me?"

"He would consider himself betrayed. Come, dear, let's go in. People are staring."

They took their places again in the parquet of the great opera house. It seemed to Millicent that long and drearily indistinct years had passed since the first night, scarcely a week before, when she had met him. For now she knew—the man she had so rudely unmasked was her troubadour. The man she had met at the Old Absinthe House was an impostor.

She pleaded with Constance as they sat waiting. "*Please* tell me who he is! I do so want to tell him—how—sorry I am."

"I can't, dear, I can't. He must never know I saw his face. He is terribly hurt, as it is. You don't understand how proud and sensitive these people are—how seriously they take their Mardi Gras."

"But I was—tricked!" half-sobbed Millicent. "How was I to know?"

It does not brighten the spirits of a girl to be left, a forsaken spectator, at the last and most brilliant of all the balls of Mardi Gras. Constance and Eula were summoned to the stage to dance, but Millicent was not called. She watched the bright spectacle through a glaze of tears. She wondered which of the bacchants—and bit her lip for wondering. She had never been so miserable in all her life.

They remained to the end of the ball, for this was the last of Mardi Gras, the season of make-believe. At midnight the sad old bells of St. Louis Cathedral tolled the signal for gayety to sink into ashes. The music ceased, the maskers vanished, the merriment hushed, the play was over.

ASH WEDNESDAY, and the leaden sky of a late sub-tropical winter. Desolate dawn, gray-washing the gloomy windows of Millicent's bedroom.

Millicent had not slept. It had been a long and miserable night, these first black hours of Lent. She felt she had disgraced her hostess, disgraced herself. She had committed the unpardonable sin. Anything goes at Mardi Gras—anything but the contemptuous unmasking of a member of a carnival society.

Today there came no roses with *petit déjeuner*.

Constance and Eula were sorry for her. They showed it with a thousand little kindnesses which made her very uncomfortable, though she knew they were well-meant. They took her sight-seeing, for that is all there is to do, when Lent prevails. She went through the old Spanish calaboose called the Cabildo, now a museum filled with curious relics; the St.

Louis Hotel, with its ante-bellum slave-block in the courtyard; Jackson Square and the Cathedral, the French Market and the levees. And it all bored Millicent inexpressibly.

She was going home. She told herself that a hundred times—but she never told Eula, who was to go back with her, or her hostess.

"Tomorrow," said Eula, with the tail-end of an impish twinkle in her eye, "we're going out to the dear little Chapel of St. Honoré. You'll get a kick out of *that!*"

"A church?" asked Millicent despondently.

"A chapel—an old, mediaeval, mysterious chapel. And do you know who St. Honoré was?"

"No."

"He was a patron saint of lovers."

"Oh!" said Millicent.

"You get a candle, and you go in and light it in the chapel, and make a wish. And if the wish has anything to do with love, they say—oh, Millicent, dear, I'm sorry—so sorry, dear!"

But Millicent was in no mood for condolences. She dashed upstairs to her room, because she couldn't stand it any longer, and locked the door. And one standing outside the door, as Constance did a little later, would have said the jerky little sounds one heard were sobs.

Constance knocked very gently, and begged to be admitted. But Millicent wouldn't let her in until she had argued patiently for a long time, and finally had said: "I've got some news for you, dear—about *him!*"

And then it was that Millicent opened the door and asked very miserably, "What did you say?"

"I said news about him, honey. But I'm afraid you're not going to like it."

"It's quite all right," replied Millicent distantly. "It really doesn't matter, does it—what—I like?"

"Oh, you mustn't feel that way about it, honey. I'm awfully sorry. It put me in a dreadful position, don't you see?"

"I see. I'm sorry, Constance."

"I can't tell you his name, he forbids that, but I can tell you some things. The other man was his brother, a perfect devil of a prankster."

"It was a very—funny—joke," said Millicent, in a voice that had nothing at all to do with happiness.

"A regular blood and a rake, that's what his brother is, the black sheep of the family. But everybody loves him and lets him get away with it. It was his idea of a wonderful Mardi Gras joke, to call you up and arrange a meeting at the Old Absinthe House. He didn't mean any harm. Only he had been celebrating a little too much. He just 'borrowed' his brother's ring—he knew all about you, don't you see, because he was at the ball too, and saw you wearing the ring, and——"

"I'm going home!" burst out Millicent suddenly and vehemently. "I've never been so outrageously treated in all my life! I'm going home as soon as I can get a taxicab—that's what I'm going to do!" She darted about the room gathering up fluffy and silky things. "I've been tricked, and lied to, and insulted, long enough! I'm mad! Do you hear me, Constance Garnett——*I am mad!*"

"But you can't go home, honey, until you get a reservation," protested Constance. "The trains are packed and jammed, honey. And besides, he's awfully sorry, honey, and he might——"

"He ought to be 'awfully sorry, honey,'" cried Millicent spitefully. "I never want to see him again! I never want to hear his name!"

"You never have heard it, honey."

"So much the better!"

Constance, not knowing what else to do, went downstairs and called the railroad offices only to be told that her friend couldn't get started toward New York for five days, unless she rode in a day coach. Which was that. And finding Eula giggling in the library, she told her what had happened, adding:

"I think we've carried the thing too far, Eula. She really isn't cold any more. She's red-hot. And if she ever sees Henri Guerard again, she'll snatch him bald-headed."

"She won't," denied Eula wisely. "These indifferent ones run around with their noses in the air for a long time, but when they do fall you can hear 'em flop for miles. Did Henri say he would see it through?"

"Yes. He was awfully dubious about the success of it, but he promised."

"If that fool brother hadn't messed up in this," pouted Eula, "everything would have been all right."

THE Chapel of St. Honoré nestles grayly near a cemetery.

Devout maidens go there and pray for hours, while a taper burns at the altar. They pray to the good Saint to allay the pangs of love, and to move the unfeeling hearts of the beloved who are unloving. Casual sightseeing tourists do not wait to pray while a long taper is slowly burning. They merely light their candles, make a wish, and leave them.

Twilight was near, the day the three girls made their pilgrimage, and they had the quaint place to themselves. Peace and soft shadows shrouded the gray little chapel.

Millicent came in a mood of passive defiance. If the sightseeing must be finished, all right. Since she could not get away from New Orleans at once, she could at least show that her attitude was one of indifference.

But the spirit of calm and reverence that pervades the Chapel of St. Honoré is soothing. Somehow it brought rest to Millicent as she stood in a shaft of late sunlight that came through the western windows. Three candles had been left to burn steadfastly at the altar, but Millicent was quite alone. Eula and Constance had gone, they said, to look for the clovers with the blood-red hearts that grew near the chapel; clovers with perfect crimson hearts, that grew only here.

Millicent was faintly conscious of his step before he entered the chapel. An instinct less erring than her eyes told her it was he, before she had seen him.

He approached her hesitantly at first, then with eager hopefulness, and seized her hand and kissed it. "Millicent! Then it is true—you are not really angry—after all?"

Millicent fought back the throng of

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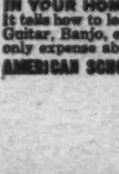

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assorted impulses that assailed her. Among the few weapons left her, she chose indifference.

"I haven't had the honor, it seems, of an introduction."

"Constance has told you, surely. She said——"

"She has told me nothing," said Millicent with a severity that surprised herself. "Except that you were so outraged that it would be necessary for me to get down on my knees and beg your forgiveness. Shall I apologize now—or do we need witnesses?"

"Don't, don't!" he pleaded. "I would have come to you, Millicent, but she said you were angry and unforgiving, and never wanted to see me—until today!"

"Oh, she did, did she?" There burst upon Millicent the full, revealing truth. "Well, she was right. I didn't want to see you—I don't want to see you now! Please go away."

"But, *demoiselle des neiges,* I am *so* sorry!"

"Don't you dare call me a snowball again!"

"My brother is so sorry, too. He begs to apologize."

"You make me sick—both of you!"

"And my mother and father—they are so sorry!"

"It's a sorry family," conceded Millicent with fine malice. "And aren't the cook and the butler sorry a little, too?"

He gathered her in a huge hug, at that, and kissed her lips until they ceased protesting.

"But I don't—even—know—your—name!"

She gasped the words between punctuation marks that seemed not wholly unwelcome.

"First I must give you back your ring," he whispered, slipping it on her finger. "Now I shall beg to be presented."

Outside in the twilight, Eula and Constance were waiting a bit impatiently. For they had finished gathering two great bouquets of the clovers with the crimson hearts, and it was growing dark.

The 18-Carat Angel—Continued from page 45

back from Calais in the squadron car. One of them was telling what had happened:

"Just as we passed through Gravelines, Rosie, who was driving, had to turn on the lights to get through a bad piece of road there."

"Didn't you fools know," interrupted the C. O., "that there are a dozen special orders against showing any lights at night within a hundred miles of the lines?"

"Yes, but there're some big holes in the road there, and we'd never have gotten through without the lights. So we took a chance. We came through, and as we were turning the corner we heard a Hun coming down and Archie opened up. It must have been a small two-seater because he came right on down. Rosie got excited and yanked the switch so hard that he broke it and couldn't get the lights out. So he stepped on the petrol and down the road we went, hell bent for election, with this damn Hun chasing us and machine-gunning us for all he was worth. We could see his exhaust and his guns spurting right above us. Rosie yelled for me to get the pistol, but I got under the lap-robe. Then Rosie got a brilliant idea and stopped the car and kicked the lights out."

"Served you bloody fools jolly well right," said the C. O. "And I hope you've got the wind-up proper. Where's Rosie?"

"He went out to see the damage on the airdrome and see if any of his blessed hangars are hurt."

"Right-o. Let's all go have a look. But no cigarets or matches. There may still be a couple of the beggars about somewhere."

We all trailed out on the airdrome in the moonlight and found three big bomb craters, about twelve feet in diameter and ten feet deep. They were just in front of the hangars, which were damaged some by the fragments.

"Damn rotten aim these blighters have," the C. O. commented. "But here are three fine marble holes. Let's have a game. No, we'll have a battle of our own. A Flight can take this hole. B Flight can take that one. And C that one over there. We'll have a real pukka offensive. Hurry up, every one in your fort."

Every one jumped into a crater and the C. O. counted noses.

"C Flight is short a man. I'll fight with C. That makes four apiece. Get your scouting parties ready and whoever captures the other's fort gets a bottle of pop on the King. Ready—go."

For half an hour we wrestled and fought in the dark. There was only one serious casualty. The C. O. bit Mac's ear and Mac gave him a terrific crack on the chin which nearly put him out. We threw each other into the craters and howled and yelled until 219 Squadron from the other side of the airdrome dashed over and joined us. The C. O. executed a flank movement, and by a masterly bit of strategy withdrew his men, leaving 219 fighting over one shell hole. Then he led his forces in a surprise attack on 219's bar. The movement was successful, and by the time 219 realized what had happened their bar was completely despoiled.

Then we went over to watch the Handleys coming home. Every time one of them would try to land the landing lights would be switched on for a moment to show them an airdrome covered with bomb craters—twenty-four in all. So the poor old Handleys either had to go over and try to land on the beach in the dark, or stay up all night. They had a hard time that night, for one bomb had fallen directly on their dugout and killed thirty-two officers and men.

"Yes," said the C. O. as we started home, "there'll be dirty work at the cross-roads over this night's business. The Brigade will order the Wing to do a reprisal, and we'll have to do the reprising. We'll have to go over in daylight to their airdrome and shoot it up and chase the mechanics around on the ground. Damn this sector anyway. Three weeks up here and not a pukka dog-fight yet."

A COUPLE of days later Mac and I were out doing a high patrol with Larry Calgan, another American in the 185th. It was a very cloudy morning, and the flight commander had sent us off because he thought there would be nothing to do. We were flying single-seater scout planes; I was leading, and climbed up through gaps in the clouds to fifteen thousand feet where it was clear. Crossing the lines at that altitude, we went ten or fifteen miles into Hunland. We flew up and down in front of our sector for an hour, but saw no signs of hostile aircraft.

I was about to wash out and go on home to breakfast when I sighted a tiny speck down low between two big clouds on the other side of Estaires. I watched it and saw that it was moving. It was well in Hunland but was getting no Archie, so I concluded it was a Hun two-seater trying to sneak over under the clouds to reconnoiter. I waved to Larry and Mac and signaled that I saw a Hun. I pointed at Estaires. When they waved back that they saw it, too, I cleared my guns and started down.

The Hun saw us when we were still three thousand feet above him. He turned and dove for home at once. I soon overtook him and dove in front of him as I came down, forcing him to pull up and turn. Larry came down on the other side, and we both went under to get at his blind spot. As I came in close and opened fire, Mac came straight down from above with both guns going and flew right at his cockpit. The observer was standing up shooting at me—I saw him crumple and drop as Mac pulled out of his dive. There was a puff of smoke, a cloud of flame and the two-seater started down in a vertical dive, leaving a comet-like tail of smoke and flame in its path. My heart was in my throat as I released my triggers; I rose up in my seat and in exaltation gave a yell which the wind and noise from my engine drowned before it could reach my own ears.

Then I turned on my side and watched the Hun as he hit. A big pillar of flame spouted up from the ground and died down immediately. Suddenly I became sick at my stomach as I thought of what we had done to two human beings.

Archie and the pompoms were getting our range, so we scurried home through a cloud of bursting shells and incendiary bullets.

That was the first "flamer" that the squadron had brought down, and being still considered novices, we were naturally very proud of ourselves. The flight commander bawled us out good-naturedly and assured us that the next time it would be the other way around—that no man ever lived to dive on a two-seater more than once. The C. O. said that since we were so good we could do the ground straff when we went after the Hun airdrome.

Shortly after our show Mac got a letter. He let me read it:

Dear Mac:

Your virtue must be its own reward for I hear that you shot down a Hun in flames. Congratulations! I'm cheering for you—I knew you could do it.

I think I'll adopt you and be your *marraine*. I tried this French pastime once before but my young knight missed the idea and came home on leave with the wrong kind of affection. It was very embarrassing. So this time I shall avoid any such complication by remaining incognito. You don't mind, do you? Maybe I'll knit you some socks and maybe I won't. Maybe I'll send you a box of food and a case of port. And I can write you very affectionate letters if I want to which will cost me nothing. I shall share your triumphs, and when the King decorates you I shall be there to applaud and maybe kiss you on both cheeks like Papa Joffre. So tie my glove to your wing and take me with you on your trips above the clouds. Get me another Hun soon.

YOUR SAVOY FRIEND.

"Can you beat that?" Mac asked, when we were discussing the letter afterwards.

"No," I admitted, "I can't even tie it. The wench is all broken out with romance. Such a thing ought to be enough to make you quit drinking. Wonder what she is anyway. It's a shame you can't remember what she looks like."

"Damn good, anyway."

I held the note-paper up to the light. There was a crest and a fancy border.

"She uses good note-paper, at least," I told him, "and she writes a good hand. It's postmarked London. I'll bet she's not one of the regular night club crowd."

"No, I don't think she is either. Imagine one of that outfit leaving before breakfast! Beats me. But what was she doing down at the Savoy? And why was she in my room at four o'clock in the morning in my pajamas? And after she got there why did she leave like that and write me cuckoo letters? Is she Lady Bountiful or is she going to blackmail me? I'll bite either way. Come on and let's get ready for tea."

The day for which the ground straff was scheduled arrived. This show was one we didn't care for particularly. It meant coming down to the ground twenty-five miles in Hunland and straffing the hangars, and then coming back all the way at five hundred feet, with the whole Hun army shooting at us.

But it came off rather well, as it happened. Three squadrons of us went over in high formation. A squadron of Bristols dropped bombs on the hangars first. Then we went down to the ground with phosphorous bombs and shot up the machines on the ground. Three Hun planes tried to take off to fight, but we shot them down before they had enough altitude to manoeuver. Two hangars caught fire. And though we lost two men who were hit from the ground on the way back, it was counted a successful raid.

We moved south the next week to a sector where there was more fighting and less night bombing. One morning Mac and I were out together, Mac leading. We had been up for perhaps an hour when I saw a speck above the clouds over by Armentières, twenty-five miles in Hunland. I fired my guns to attract Mac's attention and pointed to the speck. He waved back, indicating that he saw it, and we both started for it. The plane was a Hun two-seater, apparently getting altitude preparatory to coming over high to take pictures. The pilot saw us a long way off and started to dive away from us. But we had altitude on him, and speed, so we gained rapidly. I had the better engine and reached him before Mac did by fifteen or twenty seconds. I did our usual stunt—I dove and opened fire on a level with his tail and then went under him to make him turn, in that way holding him for Mac. He turned, and Mac came down from the other side with both guns spitting incendiary bullets into his fusilage. The Hun didn't flame but he turned over slowly and went down in a vertical dive.

I KNEW that we were a long way over in Hunland, but that was all. My compass was spinning around madly and my motor was missing. The clouds were so heavy that we could get only an occasional glimpse of the ground. I was considerably below Mac and losing altitude, so I decided to go on down below the clouds and have a look.

I came through the clouds right in the middle of six Hun scouts, and I went right back up again. My motor picked up and I climbed to where it was clear. I got a good dose of Archie later and ran into a thunder-storm before I got my bearings and found my way home.

There was no news of Mac all that day and it wasn't until nearly dark that we got word of him. His oil pipe had been hit by the Hun observer and he had been just able to get back to our side of the lines. He had such a small margin that he was forced to land down wind in the front lines and had hit a machine gun emplacement as he leveled off. He was badly smashed up. Before any of us had a chance to see him, he was sent back to Boulogne. Later he was sent to London, and we heard from the London headquarters that he was having a hard time.

THE first thing I did when I got my leave was to go to London to look for Mac. I found him at a hospital in the suburbs. He was still in bed, with his face and arm bandaged. I talked to his nurse before I saw him.

"Don't talk about the front to him," she told me. "His nerves are in a terrible state. I have a lot of trouble with him."

Now this was no ordinary nurse. She was so soothing to the eyes that I stared at her in open-mouthed wonder until she began to blush.

"I can't imagine how you would have trouble with him," I told her. "One good look at you and any man ought to eat out of your hand."

There were tears in her eyes as she said: "You don't know, then, that he will probably never see again. That's his main trouble—eyes. He'll be all right otherwise. The machine gun hit him in the face."

"My gosh, that's tough," I said. "Poor old Mac. But isn't there any chance that his eyes will pull through?"

"There is a chance but it's very slim. And it will be a long time. He doesn't

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know it yet. Don't you tell him, whatever you do. He's enough trouble as it is."

So it was with a heavy heart that I went to his room and tried to cheer him up.

"Say," I began after a moment's greeting, "how do you rate a special nurse and a private room? Who are you, anyway?"

"Oh, the head nurse fixed it up for me. I've got an awful drag with her. After I was here about a week she moved me in here and gave me a special. And the special is awfully good to me. That's the one that brought you in. I can't see anything with this bandage. Tell me, what does she look like?

"Well, she's got the usual number of eyes, ears, and teeth, with but a single nose and one mouth. I can recommend them all highly. However, I'll tell you more about her after I take her out dancing."

"No, you don't," he said quickly. "You leave her alone. She's too nice a girl to be going out with you and I won't have it."

"Oh, is that so? How do you know how nice a girl she is?"

"You leave her alone. She's a nice girl, I tell you. She told me so. Go on down to Murray's and leave her be."

"All right, if she's your private property. But why the righteous indignation at me. I never kidnaped anybody. She's free, white, and twenty-one. And speaking of perfect ladies, did you ever hear anything more from your Savoy girl? Here's her chance to be really romantic and nurse you back to health."

"She still writes to me. She found out I was here and sends me flowers and candy sometimes. But she hasn't come to see me yet. She writes me wonderful letters. That's about all that keeps me going. Sometimes I wish I hadn't tried to level off at all, but just gone on in. I knew I couldn't make it. You bums out at the front don't appreciate life."

"OH, SHUT up! You're damn lucky. Nearly everybody else is dead. What have you got to crab about? 17 lost nine men last week and 148 lost eleven—three of them in flames. And you lie here with a beautiful madonna or prima donna, as the case may be, to pat your hand—yet you want a chance to gripe. Poor Mathews got hit by a hundred and twenty pound bomb last week, and Tommy Herbert sat on a tracer bullet. The other day Mannock got killed from the ground; Forster and Jenkinson went down in flames; and you want to gripe because you've got to enjoy female society for a few weeks. Did you hear the stunt Bim and Bob pulled?"

We talked on, swapping news and gossip, and he brightened up considerably. Finally the nurse came in and told me it was time to leave.

In looking for my cap and gloves I knocked over a box of paper on the bureau. I was picking it up when I caught sight of a sheet of paper.

"Whose paper is this?" I demanded, *sotto voce.*

"I'm sorry to have to chase you away," said the nurse, ignoring my question, "but you've been here quite a time." And she pushed me gently into the hall.

"I'll wait outside," I told her. "I want to see you."

"But I don't want to see you," she returned. "Mac has told me already what a bum you are."

"All right then, I'll tell him whose notepaper that is. I know it."

"Then wait a few minutes for me." She was blushing furiously as she hurried away.

"So," I said, when we were seated outside on the porch, "you are the romantic lady of the Savoy! The *marraine de luxe!* Have you a little sister by any chance? Well, well, tell me more. How did you work it?"

"Very simply," she told me. "I have a friend who is doing stenographic work at the American headquarters. That's how I knew where he was and kept track of everything that happened to him. I'm a Canadian and came over with a Canadian hospital unit. My people have some influence and it was no trouble at all to get transferred and arrange to be his special nurse. Now don't you go and spoil it all by telling him. It would break his heart if you took away his illusion about the beautiful lady who writes him letters about everything that happens. He thinks he has a date with her."

"What about the Savoy?" I asked. "He told me about the meeting."

"In the first place," she said coloring prettily, "it's none of your business. And in the second place he shouldn't have told you. And in the third place, it was all wrong."

"I know all that, but tell me more. I'm curious."

"I suppose anything is better than what you imagine. I had been over here a year—working hard all the time. All the other girls were having a lot of fun, and I was having none. It was a pretty drab life and I thought I was entitled to a little fun. And the War was on my nerves. I was in a hospital up at St. Albans and all the other nurses used to come down to London with their friends and I couldn't see why I shouldn't, too. But I was brought up very strictly and somehow or other I couldn't break away from my raising, no matter how much I wanted to."

"What did you say your name was?"

"I didn't say. But it's Allyston."

"From Montreal?"

"Yes."

"Any relation to the fellow who used to race those big boats?"

"That's my father."

"I know him. Well, well, go on with the story. I am all attention."

"All the girls had some one to worry over out at the front and send things to and get letters from. It was sort of their War and it wasn't mine at all. I wanted somebody out there too. So, like the French girls, I adopted an infantry captain. All went well for a while and I began to take more interest in the War and not hate my work so. Then he came back on leave and wired me to meet him in town. Of course I went, though I was scared to death. He was rather nice and we had a jolly dinner. I guess I drank a little too much champagne, for when it was time to catch the last train to St. Albans I wasn't a bit ready to go. Oh, it wasn't his fault. He said he'd get a suite at the Savoy and it would be all right. So we did end up at the Savoy after dancing all evening at Murray's.

"BUT when we got up to the suite it was different. He didn't understand at all. He thought I was accustomed to doing that sort of thing. He got affectionate, and when I resisted him he thought I was just being coy. So when he wasn't looking I ran out of the door. I saw a door half open opposite and stepped inside, locking it behind me. This suite was unoccupied, although there was a lot of officer's luggage about and I found some orders on the desk with Mac's name on them. I was really frightened you know—I think I would have jumped out the window before I would have gone back into the hall. So I decided to wait there and throw myself on the mercy of the owner of the room when he came in.

"But he didn't come in. I decided that he was out for the night and that I might as well get some sleep. So I slipped on his pajamas and went to sleep. It never occurred to me that there might be two doors to the suite. I had locked only one of them. I was awakened by a crash and got up to find him on the floor. So I took care of him, finished my nap and went home in the morning. By that time the whole thing struck me as being rather funny. I had certainly proved to be a bungling amateur and I couldn't resist leaving a note behind to that effect. That cured my yearning for amorous adventure and interest in strange men."

"But apparently it didn't," I said. "For here you are again exposing your charms to a young and very susceptible officer."

"But you don't understand. Women can't do any of the fighting so we must take care of those that fight for us. If he doesn't recover his sight I'm going to marry him, maybe. Some one has to take care of him. He doesn't know it yet, but I have arranged to take him back home as soon as he's able to go. Does that satisfy your curiosity? I'm glad you are a flyer because you probably won't last long enough to disgrace me."

"All right, that licks me. The alibi is perfect. But what if he recovers his sight?"

"I'll leave him beforehand, and he's none the worse off. But somebody must take care of him until then. After that night at the Savoy he wouldn't ever care for me and he'd be sure to recognize me. He'd never believe my story."

"Yes, Mac is sort of narrow-minded and righteous at times. But listen, bright eyes, if he ever gets a look at you and doesn't immediately fall, just you wire for me if I'm still about. I'll buy your shoes any time. And I'll keep your secret. Mac is sort of hard to handle, I know. You'd better make those letters a bit wanton and get Mac disgusted with the lady. Better kill off your rival."

"Thanks. I've got to go now. Don't let Mac ever kid you about his righteousness. As long as he's drunk or blind I can handle him. Well, good bye-e. Dodge Archie, but don't be too careful. Amnesia would be a godsend to you."

And she was gone with a smile and a wave of the hand.

see where the great rollers from the Gulf shouldered their way into the Bay in heaving ranks, clear green in the ninety feet of depth beneath their glittering crests.

The Pass was a mile in width. Midway across it, on the long slanting course he had steered the more easily to ride the rollers, Jules Landry reached forward and throttled down the motor. Head on to the seas the little cruiser rode to his quick turn of the wheel.

Armaid turned a quick, inquiring face toward him. But it was Allister who spoke.

"What's the matter? Engine trouble?" The man's voice held a note of concern beyond and above the need of mere trouble with a motor. For an occasional glimpse that he had caught in the past half-hour of Jules Landry's eyes had been disquieting. And again that sudden wash of pallor swept across Armaid's face with the clutch of fear she had vaguely felt since first she saw her husband striding up the beach. Fear born of uncertainty, as Bob Allister's concern was born.

"No, there is no engine trouble," said the husband slowly. "The trouble goes deeper than that. It is trouble to be settled out here with the three of us, alone."

And then they knew. Knew that Jules Landry's silence had not been the silence of one who sees no need for speech.

They tried to brazen it out. Their protesting words rose on the air like a flock of startled birds. Unmoved Jules Landry waved them to silence with a swift gesture.

"I ask *you* no questions," he said, looking straight into Bob Allister's eyes. "But of *you*—" his gaze swung direct as thrusting knife-blade into the eyes of Armaid—"I ask if you love him."

She knew the directness of the man; how wasted it would be to fence against the downright blow of his attack. But that knowledge was not wholly responsible for her answer, suddenly and curiously steady. Into her soul had entered the unreasoning courage born of shock and instant knowledge that the worst she might have suspected and feared was here.

"Yes, I love him," she said simply. "And he loves me. I was going to join him in New Orleans within a week. We were going away together."

Through Bob Allister's mind a chaos of surging thoughts was swirling. They were inchoate, mostly. But as Armaid spoke one thought grew dominant. Bluff it through somehow. The little fool had kicked over the apple-cart. The fat was in the fire. After what she had said there was no chance to lie out of it. Heaven knew, and the devil likewise, that he had no intention, whatever he had told her, of leaving New Orleans with the fun and the flesh-pots of the winter season and Carnival just ahead for any stupid elopement with a South Coast girl. But since matters had gone this far the boldest face a man could put on it held the greatest chance of safety. Hard to tell what that silent, glowering devil at the wheel might do otherwise.

"Yes, Landry," said Allister, "that's what we planned. We were going to give you the chance for a quiet divorce so I could marry Armaid."

It sounded fairly decent put that way, he thought.

One hand on the wheel, holding the cruiser steadily head on to the waves by seaman's instinct, Jules Landry reached with his other hand into the locker beside him. A moment he groped. Then his hand emerged. It gripped an ax, heavy, keen. Two pallid faces, dead-white with fear, were before him now. Allister's voice was shaking as he spoke.

"You crazy devil, you wouldn't murder us when I'm unarmed, would you? Don't I get a chance to fight?"

Jules Landry ignored the question. It was at Armaid he looked as he spoke.

"My dear," he said, and his voice was strangely soft, "I have not remembered enough that you have been thinking of me perhaps as a sort of second father. This summer that I have watched you and this man—I think he calls himself a man—I have seen my mistake. I think I see it too late. I'm not sure. But of one thing I am sure. There is no happiness for you with him. I may not know women, but I know men."

Again the protesting words fluttered from the pair. Again they were silent. Again the voice of Jules Landry alone rose in the little boat above the hiss of the green seas that swept past.

"Goat and hog are strangely mixed in you, Allister," said the man who had fought his way to power in his world. "I know your kind. It is not often I make mistakes about men. Yet I am not the good God, never to make mistakes. We will see what is in you, my friend, Armaid and I. You will have your chance."

He slipped the loop of a rope over the spokes, lashing the wheel. Bob Allister watched him, lips trembling. A chance! It would be a slim chance against this rock-muscled man with glinting lights in his eyes, but it would be better than to stand empty-handed and be slaughtered. If only he had a gun!

"All right!" His voice was shaking despite his most desperate efforts to hold it steady. "Give me whatever weapon I get against that ax. I'll fight it out with you."

JULES LANDRY laughed.

"*You* fight it out with *me!* Men twice the man you'll ever be I've broken across my knee, my friend," he said. "Did you not hear me say I would give you a chance?"

He stepped forward, toward them, ax in hand. Involuntarily the pair shrank back.

"There is the shore of Grand Isle, half a mile away," said Jules Landry softly, as the ax-head glittered in the sun with his gesture across the green and marching ranks of long-backed rollers. "I have seen you show your skill at swimming on our beach. You pride yourself on it. I've seen you swim for love. Now you'll swim for your love and your life. Armaid could never make that shore alone. Let the man who takes her there have her,

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that is, if he lives through these seas."

The heavy ax rose. Like a flash it came down. Splintering crackle of the thin cypress boards of the little craft answered its impact. Again it rose and fell. Again and again. Through the hole green water spurted.

Of the two who stood there stricken dumb, watching Jules Landry swing that ax, Armaid Landry was the first to move. The tiny cockpit now awash, she balanced for a moment on the swinging thwart, and then in a long clean dive she shot smoothly into a comber that sped past.

Frantically Bob Allister followed. And last of all Jules Landry, casting his ax overboard with a grim chuckle, struck out down the slanting side of a great wave as the craft sank beneath it.

On the crest of the next wave he rose and looked ahead. Armaid as he had known was swimming easily, with the long clean stroke of the South Coast folk who cleave the water with the effortlessness of the swimmers of the South Seas. She was all he saw until the crest of the next wave raised him. And then he glimpsed Bob Allister.

Already the man was far ahead of Armaid, swimming with frantic stroke, headed straight for the shore, all else but his own safety forgotten. And again Jules Landry chuckled, this time in complete understanding.

With stroke as smooth as Armaid's and many times as powerful, he shot through the water and reached her side.

"The man who said he loved you—where is he?" Jules Landry said.

Side by side they rose on the crest of a wave.

"Look at him," he said again.

"I hate you! Oh, my God, if you only knew how I hate you!" gasped Armaid.

And then without another word she sank.

Down through the green depths Jules Landry swam after her. More by instinct than by clear sight, though he swam with open eyes and the water was light about them, he reached her; thrust one powerful hand into the sodden masses of her hair. His other arm, stroking magnificently, brought them to the surface.

"Let me go! Let me go! Don't you know that I *want* to die!" she sobbed chokingly. Lithe as a wildcat and as fierce she fought with him, clawing, writhing, seeking to choke him with both hands, battling to break his grip.

His great arm drew back—swung forward with clenched fist. Armaid's head sank limply back. Steadily, silently, as he had done the work that had won him his reputation, Jule Landry went to his task.

On the South Coast they will tell you yet of that rescue of his—how foot by foot Jules Landry fought his way across Barataria Pass, towing with him his wife, sodden and unconscious. And at last he won to the shore at Grand Isle.

Then, for it was a lonely stretch of treacherous rocky shore on which he landed, after a brief rest he picked up the still unconscious body and bore it in his arms to their home.

Scarcely had he wrapped her in blankets and forced brandy past her bleached lips when Doctor Dufossat was at the house.

"Jules!" There was a world of relief in the doctor's voice. "You are safe! And Armaid?"

"Safe too," said Jules Landry. "On the bed in there. But she will need you."

"God be praised that you both live! I did not know what I would find. No one, I feared. I had gone to my home from a patient only a little while ago. There I found Allister exhausted. When his strength returned he was like a madman. He sent word to Jacques Bergeron to hold his launch ready to take him to the New Orleans packet. Then he hurled his clothes into his bags and told me he was leaving at once. A wild tale it was I gathered from the fragments of his talk. I did not know what it was all about, so I got a message to Jacques Bergeron not to start his boat until he heard from me."

"Let him go," said Jules Landry with a smile. "We are better without that man on Grand Isle. Need I tell you more, my friend?"

Floating back to consciousness, Armaid Landry opened her eyes. Tucked between sheets beneath warm blankets she lay in her own room, her own bed. The sting of brandy was on her lips and in her throat. Beside her stood Doctor Dufossat. Her lips moved weakly.

"Jules. Where is he?"

"Gone," said Doctor Dufossat.

Galvanically Armaid sat up in bed.

"Gone!"

"To Bassa-Bassa and Manilla Village. He left word he would be back in a few days."

THOSE days remain always a blur in the memory of Armaid Landry. All but the evening of the last day. Then, for the first time of her voluntary immurement in the house, her shame and humiliation ended at the sound of a footstep outside the door—a step she knew.

The door opened. There in the hall stood her husband. Unsmilingly he spoke.

"I have thought it all out, Armaid," he said. "I suppose you will want to go away. That is why I have been gone so long. I have just got back from New Orleans."

From his pocket he drew two envelopes. One was addressed to a hotel, one to a banker.

"If you will present these when you reach the city you will not find yourself homeless or without money," he said. "These will give you time to rest and think and make your plans. When those plans are made you need only let me know to have what help you need."

A moment there was silence between them. Then the two envelopes dropped fluttering to the floor. For with a sobbing little cry Armaid Landry had covered the space between her and the man who stood there so still. She was in his arms.

"Oh, Jules—Jules!" she sobbed. "What can I say? What can I do to show you how very much I know the fool I have been? Go! I want to stay here! With you! Can't you forgive me? Don't you want me any more?"

The great arms that tightened around her were her only answer. It was answer enough.

———

off hour she met him at the room in the woods.

"Coming here before," she told him, "is what got me in bad."

"You mean—you were here when Turley was robbed?"

"Yes. Not much of an alibi, is it?"

"I never thought you did it, Sin. You couldn't do anything like that."

"Sometimes—lately—I feel like I could!"

"Sin—don't get that way. It's not you. You're straight." He touched her arm hesitantly.

The tenderness of his voice wiped the mask of hardness from her face. His arm drew her to him, held her gently while his fingers stroked her hair. Sin, who could meet unwelcome advances like a wildcat, was submissive before Dick's gentleness.

Gratefully she accepted the solace of his arms. Her face lifted to his, she responded to his embrace. But after a moment she stirred, drew back.

"Gee!" she said shamefacedly, "you must think I'm soft!"

"Sin—I don't want you to grow hard—like the others."

"I ought to be—by this time." She laughed shortly. "Wait till I serve time—that'll be my finishing school!"

"Sin, I wish I could do something. I feel like I was some to blame."

"Where were you that night, Dick? I waited and you never showed up."

"I know. I was coming. But Inez stopped me and we got to talking."

"Inez? How come?"

"She wanted me to order some songs, and asked me about them. I know what you mean—she never had any use for me. Well, I haven't much time for her, either. Say, have you noticed how she's making a play for Hisky?"

"Yeah."

"Sin—I thought maybe—that you and Hisky——"

"Me? Nothing doing!"

Velvet Dick's face lighted. "Lord, Sin, I'm glad! Because you don't want to stick around here——"

"Why not? This is all I know. It's you, Dick, that ought to get out. Don't I know you're different from the mine-run of piano players in joints like ours?"

"Sin—you really mean that?"

"Honest. You got something, Dick. Different. I don't know a thing—but I can feel it."

"Then, honey, you go away with me. If I had you, Sin, I could do anything. If you were my girl. Mine!" His arms went around her again. "Say that you will! Say it!"

"What you want me to do? Jump my bail?"

"No of course not, honey. But tell me—would you marry me, Sin? Would you? Marry me, and we'll go to Chicago—or New York——"

Velvet Dick held her off from him, looked eagerly into her face.

"I—I don't know, Dick."

"Honey—you know you're all that I care about. You—you think it over——"

She appeared uncomfortable before his pleading.

"Listen, Dick,—it's time we got back."

"Then tomorrow night we'll—tomorrow night you'll come out again?"

"Yes," she promised.

WITHIN the heavy shadow of a grape arbor Velvet Dick stood waiting. It was a few minutes after ten o'clock and he had just slipped away from the Blue Moon.

From behind the leafy screen he had a partial view of the old apple tree which formed the ladder from the second floor. And as he watched a slight girlish figure emerged from the French windows and quietly swung into the tree. He heard the faint sound of steps on the boards along the apple branch.

Velvet Dick drew eager lips into shape for a low whistle to her.

But the dimly seen figure, keeping close to the shadows, did not turn toward the vineyard—instead disappeared in the direction of a side alley.

Dick held his breath, in his eyes a puzzled look replacing anticipation. Then he followed swiftly.

Followed into an adjoining alleyway that ran back of Maysville's row of business houses. With a sudden added caution. For the stride of the figure ahead was not the swinging stride of the dancer Sin.

Crouching at the rear corner of Mazelli's grocery, Velvet Dick watched the unknown figure stealthily enter the side door. Then he ran toward the same entrance.

Cautiously he pulled the screen open, and dropping to his knees crawled inside the grocery. Edging forward, he peered out from behind a tier of crates.

Mike Mazelli, his hands upraised, was backing toward the cash register, confronted by the incongruously small figure in skirts that Velvet Dick had followed from the Blue Moon.

Velvet Dick rose to his feet and was tiptoeing forward when a creaking board betrayed him.

The bandit whirled, firing as Dick plunged forward.

A bullet glanced along Dick's ribs and another struck his shoulder, staggering him. But in the instant before he swayed and fell Mike Mazelli crashed down on the bandit, knocking the gun to the floor.

The shots quickly drew several men to the store entrance. They stared at Mike, sitting upon an impotent, squirming figure.

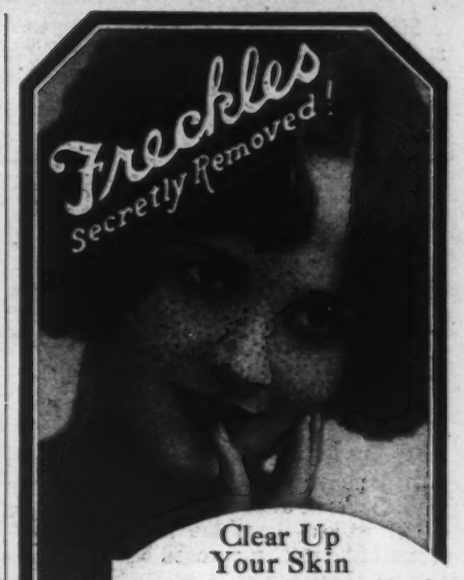
"Hey!" roared Mike. "We got the bobbed-haired bandit!" He held up a red wig. "See who she be!"

They looked into the cringing face of little Ted Walton, Inez' young brother.

"'Ere, quick, take him. 'E shot Dick."

Half an hour Sin waited among the trees on the ridge back of the camp but Velvet Dick did not appear. In vain she listened for his approach, her eyes puzzled.

Finally she started back toward the Blue Moon. As she picked her way along, the sound of gun-shots came to her faintly. "Somebody's blasting!" she said to herself in the argot of the camp. This was nothing very unusual on a Maysville night.



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Sin walked through the orchard to the apple tree, clambered nimbly up its twisted limb to the second floor, and stepped into the hallway.

Then a small noise caught her attention. The soft whir of a muffled bell at the head of the hall.

A low insistent buzzing, like a whisper. A warning whisper.

The same was sounding at the bar and in the gaming-room. It would stop the whirl of roulette, the tumbling of dice on the green cloth. It would cause the liquor at the bar to disappear down a hidden dumb-waiter into the basement.

It was the warning that came from the guardian at the gateway of the Blue Moon.

The buzz of the bell presaged trouble. A raid, perhaps. Employees of the resort waited, on the alert for what might come.

Sin walked down the hallway to the stairs. She met an aproned bar-boy rushing up the steps.

"What's up?" She grasped his shoulder.

The boy stared at Sin. Suddenly he was animated with importance, realizing that it had fallen to him to give exciting news to the one most deeply concerned. He spoke in breathless jerks.

"They got the bandit. Ted Walton—dressed in girl's clothes an' wearin' a wig to look like you! They think Inez put him up to it. Velvet Dick trailed him from here and jumped him when he was stickin' up Mike Mazelli. He got shot."

"Who? Who's shot?"

"Dick. He didn't have a rod—an' Ted blasted into him. They're bringing him in now."

"Dick!" Sin gasped. "Shot!" Her fingers bit into the boy's shoulder until he twisted in her grasp.

Suddenly she pushed him from her and dashed down the stairs into the main room.

They were carrying Velvet Dick in on an automobile cushion. His limp figure curled up on it. His face pale, tight, drawn.

"Here. This way." Hisky, pushing aside tables and chairs. "Stand back there a bit, will ya?"

Sin stood still and clenched her hands. Standing on tiptoe, she beat her knuckles together.

Hurrying ahead of the men who carried Velvet Dick upstairs, she directed them to his room. By the time they had the wounded man on his bed a group of the curious had formed.

Sin pulled at Hisky's arm. "The doctor——"

"Yeah. They 'phoned in from Mazelli's fer Doc Willets.

"Hisky, don't let 'em crowd in here, please!"

At the manager's insistence the growing group of onlookers slowly shuffled out. When the room had cleared Hisky turned to Sin.

He tried to take her hands. "Sin! I see I was all wrong——"

She tore herself away from him. "Go down and bring up the doctor. I have to get Dick ready. Hisky—go away!"

He hesitated. "I thought I'd——"

"No, I'll take care of him. She pushed at Hisky desperately. "He's mine to take care of. You understand, Hisky. Mine!"

Hisky, stepping backward through the doorway, stared. She closed the door on his round, surprised eyes.

Turning, she stepped swiftly over to the bed and dropped on her knees beside Velvet Dick.

"Sin," he whispered, "you mean——"

She bent her head and laid her cheek softly against his.

ONE afternoon a few weeks later Sin, who had been sitting silently by Dick's bed while he dozed, leaned over him and touched his closed lids tentatively.

"Dick," she coaxed, "I want to tell you something."

Opening his eyes, he looked at her inquiringly.

"I want to answer a question you asked me a while ago—do you remember? About how I came to get my name?"

Dick nodded. "If you want to tell me, Sin——"

"Of course I do," she laughed. "I was only teasing you anyway, that day you spoke of it. You think it's spelled S-i-n, don't you? Every one does. Well, it's not. It's C-i-n."

His stare was puzzled. "Why?"

She pointed to her feet—to the smallness of them. "For Cinderella," she said.

"Oh——"

She laughed again. Dick looked so taken in. But somehow pleased too.

"You should have guessed," said Sin severely. "You said yourself that I couldn't keep even Cinderella's slippers on my feet unless I put some stuffing in the toes."

"What difference does it make how you spell it," murmured Dick, "when either way it stands for you."

The Two Spinsters—Continued from page 50

full of shadowy places, unilluminated by the single oil lamp. The two women themselves were only dimly visible. Yet every now and then in the flickering firelight he caught a clearer glimpse of them. They were so uncannily alike that they might well be twins. He found himself speculating as to their history. They must once have been very beautiful.

"I wonder whether it will be possible," he asked, after a somewhat prolonged pause, "to encroach further upon your hospitality and beg for a sofa or a bed for the night? Any place will do," he added hastily.

Mathilda rose at once to her feet. She took another candle from the mantelpiece and lit it.

"I will show you," she said, "where you may sleep."

For a moment Grant was startled. He had happened to glance towards Annabelle and was amazed at a sudden curious expression—an expression almost of malice in her face. He stooped to bring her into the little halo of lamplight more completely, and stared at her incredulously. The expression, if ever it had been there, had vanished. She was simply looking at him patiently with something in her face which he failed utterly to understand.

"If you will follow me," Mathilda invited.

Grant rose to his feet. Flip turned round with a final challenging bark to the huge sheep dog who had accepted a position remote from the fire, and failing to elicit any satisfactory response trotted after her master. They passed into a well-shaped but almost empty hall, up a broad flight of oak stairs to the first landing. Outside the room from which Grant had seen the candlelight she paused for a moment and listened.

"You have another guest?" he inquired.

"Annabelle has a guest," she replied. "You are mine. Follow me please."

She led the way to a bedchamber in which was a huge four-poster and little else. She set the candle upon a table and turned down a sort of crazy quilt which covered the bedclothes. She felt the sheets and nodded approvingly. Grant found himself unconsciously following her example. To his surprise they were warm. She pointed to a great brass bed-warmer with a long handle at the further end of the room, from which a little smoke was still curling upwards.

"You were expecting some one tonight?" he asked curiously.

"We are always prepared," she answered.

She left the room, apparently forgetting to wish him good-night. He called out pleasantly after her, but she made no response. He heard her level footsteps as she descended the stairs. Then again there was silence—silence down below, silence in the part of the house where he was. Flip, who was sniffing round the room, at times showed signs of excitement, at times growled. Grant, opening the window, ventured upon a cigaret.

"Don't know that I blame you, old girl," he said. "It's a queer place."

OUTSIDE there was nothing to be seen and little to be heard save the roaring of a water torrent close at hand and the patter of rain. He suddenly remembered his bag, and, leaving the door of his room open, descended the stairs. In the great stone kitchen the two women were seated exactly as they had been before his coming, and during his meal. They both looked at him but neither spoke.

"If you don't mind," he explained, "I want to fetch my bag from the car."

Mathilda, the woman who had admitted him, nodded acquiescence. He passed out into the darkness, stumbled his way to the shed, and unstrapped his bag. Just as he was turning away he thrust his hand into the tool chest and drew out an electric torch which he slipped into his pocket. When he reentered the house the two women were still seated in their chairs and still silent.

"A terrible night," he remarked. "I can't tell you how thankful I am to you

for so hospitably giving me shelter."

They both looked at him but neither made any reply. This time when he reached his room he closed the door firmly, and noticed with a frown of disappointment that except for the latch there was no means of fastening it. Then he laughed to himself softly. He, the famous captor of Ned Bullivant, the victor in a score of scraps with desperate men, suddenly nervous in this lonely farmhouse inhabited by a couple of strange women.

"Time I took a holiday," he muttered to himself. "We don't understand nerves, do we, Flip?" he added.

Flip opened one eye and growled. Grant was puzzled.

"Something about she doesn't like," he ruminated. "I wonder who's in the room with the lighted candles?"

He opened his own door once more softly and listened. The silence was almost unbroken. From downstairs in the great kitchen he could hear the ticking of a clock, and he could see the thin streak of yellow light underneath the door. He crossed the landing and listened for a moment outside the room with the candles. The silence within was absolute and complete—not even the sound of the ordinary breathing of a sleeping person. He retraced his steps, closed his own door, and began to undress. At the bottom of his bag was a small automatic. His fingers played with it for a moment. Then he threw it back. The electric torch, however, he placed by the side of his bed. Before he turned in he leaned once more out of the window. The roar of the falling water seemed more insistent than ever. Otherwise there was no sound. The rain had ceased but the sky was black and starless. With a little shiver he turned away and climbed into bed.

HE HAD no idea of the time but the blackness outside was just as intense when he was suddenly awakened by Flip's low growling. She had shaken herself free from the coverlet at the foot of the bed and he could see her eyes, wicked little spots of light, gleaming through the darkness. He lay quite still for a moment, listening. From the first he knew that there was some one in the room. His own quick intuition had told him that, although he was still unable to detect a sound. Slowly his hand traveled out to the side of the bed. He took up the electric torch and turned it on. Then with an involuntary cry he shrank back. Standing within a few feet of him was Mathilda, still fully dressed, and in her hand, stretched out towards him, was the cruelest-looking knife he had ever seen. He slipped out of bed, and, honestly and self-confessedly afraid, kept the light fixed upon her.

"What do you want?" he demanded, amazed at the unsteadiness of his own voice. "What the mischief are you doing with that knife?"

"I want you, William," she answered, a note of disappointment in her tone. "Why do you keep so far away?"

He lit the candle. The finger which on the trigger of his automatic had kept Bullivant with his hands up for a lifelong two minutes, was trembling. With

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MAKE THIS TEST Take a hammer and drive as many nails into a tire as you wish, 10-20-100, it *makes no difference.* GALACITE seals the punctures instantly as soon as they are made. Stops all slow leaks and porous places. Used in all kinds of tires including low pressure Balloons. GALACITE is warranted for one year, but will last indefinitely.

GUARANTEED TO DO ALL WE CLAIM

Don't confuse Galacite with anything else ever intended for the same purpose; it is new and different—a revolutionary invention, the result of years of research and experiment. GALACITE is backed by a Money Back Guarantee. It must make good—or we will. You take no risk.

AGENTS—$5,000 to $10,000 a Year

TREMENDOUS PROFITS. Agents and Distributors everywhere to demonstrate and sell to car owners, garages, filling stations. Work all or spare time in your own home town or traveling. GALACITE sells itself. Every customer becomes so enthusiastic that he helps you sell his friends. A revolutionary invention that will make you independent. You can also manufacture and sell Galacite puncture proof inner tubes.

ACT QUICK SEND NO MONEY. Just your name and address will bring complete particulars by return mail. Get this information right now. Test it out. Get started while the territory you want is still open.

C. F. JOHNSON & CO. 19 W. Jackson Blvd., Dept. 267 CHICAGO

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